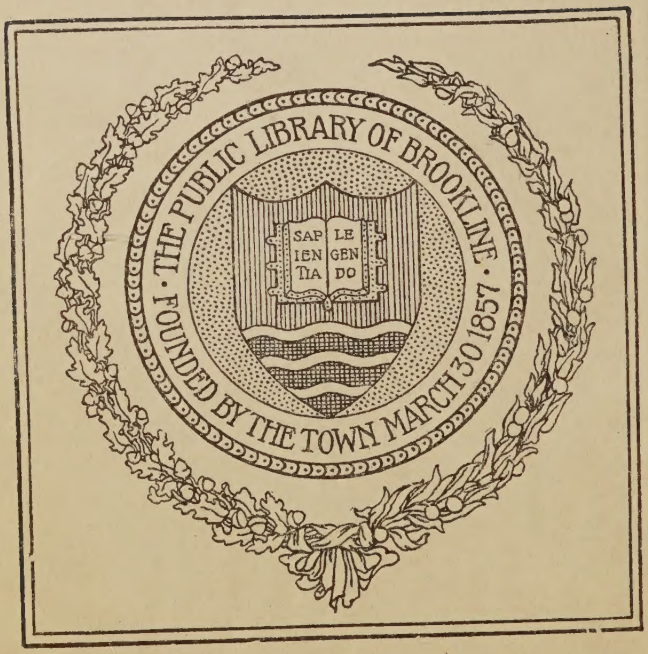


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# MODERN BRITISH POETRY

(THIRD REVISED EDITION)

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MODERN BRITISH POETRY
THIS SINGING WORLD
YESTERDAY AND TODAY
POEMS OF HEINRICH HEINE

# MODERN BRITISH POETRY

*A CRITICAL ANTHOLOGY*

*Edited by Louis Untermeyer*

THIRD REVISED EDITION

HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY

*NEW YORK*

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## A FOREWORD

*To the Third Revised Edition*

The third edition of this "critical anthology" has been prepared to meet the demand for a more detailed survey of the period. Practically all the matter included in the earlier editions has been retained and almost as much again has been added. This is true not only of the poetry but of the prose; the bibliographical and critical paragraphs which serve as introductory notes, as well as the more general preface, having been greatly amplified. By moving the calendar back from 1840 to 1830 (for reasons explained in the preface) a wider background is presented and with it the inclusion of Christina Rossetti, T. E. Brown, A. C. Swinburne, Watts-Dunton, William Morris, James Thomson—poets who do not appear in previous editions of this work. By a fortunate circumstance, the date also allows the appearance of such representatives of the Comic Spirit as Lewis Carroll and W. S. Gilbert. Among the more recent writers, Sylvia Townsend Warner, Arthur Waley, T. E. Hulme, Theodore Maynard, Stella Benson, Roy Campbell, Peter Quennell, Richard Hughes and Stephen Spender appear for the first time in these pages. The enlarged format permits the reprinting of longer poems (not in the preceding editions) and a fuller representation of Kipling, Thomas, De la Mare, Hardy, Francis Thompson, Davies, Masefield, Sassoon, Wolfe, the Sitwells and other outstanding figures already included.

It should be stated at the outset that, in spite of its inclusiveness, this compilation is far from a complete summary. No anthology, it might be added in extenuation, can hope to be. Nor should it. The duty of the anthologist (at least as far as one editor sees it) is to whet the reader's appetite, not to satisfy it. Such a collection as this, if its purpose be successful, should stimulate the reader's interest and excite him to a closer inspection of the poet's own volumes. Thus the following pages

pretend to be nothing more than a critical introduction, attempting to chart various movements and tendencies with certain outstanding personalities.

For the greatest help in the preparation of this volume, thanks must be given to most of the living poets represented here. In the majority of instances, they themselves have furnished not only invaluable data but have assisted the editor in the choice of selections, so that this gathering is, to a great extent, a record of their own taste as well as his.

A further acknowledgment must be made to the various publishers whose coöperation has been of such assistance. For permission to reprint the copyright material in this volume, the editor wishes to thank the following firms—his indebtedness being alphabetically acknowledged to:

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# MODERN BRITISH POETRY

"Sentimentality is deceiving one's self; rhetoric is deceiving other people." Artificial emotions were waning. The twisted inversions, the elaborate diction, the strained periods were doomed.

But I am proceeding too rapidly. Within the larger curve traced in this volume, there are the records of conflicting tendencies. In general—if I may be permitted an arbitrary grouping—these smaller movements may be classified as (1) The end of Victorianism and the growth of a purely decorative art, (2) The Pre-Raphaelites and Swinburne, (3) The rise and decline of the esthetic philosophy, (4) The muscular influence of Henley, (5) The Celtic revival in Ireland, (6) Rudyard Kipling and the ascendancy of mechanism in art, (7) John Masefield and the return of the rhymed narrative, (8) The war and its effects upon the Georgians, (9) The aftermath and the new bucolic poetry, (10) The post-war "literature of nerves." It may be interesting to follow these developments in somewhat closer detail.

### THE END OF VICTORIANISM

The age commonly called Victorian came to an end in England about 1880. It was an age distinguished by many true idealists and many false ideals. It was, in spite of its notable artists, on an entirely different level from the epoch preceding. Its poetry was, in the main, not universal but parochial; its romanticism was gilt and tinsel; its realism was kin to its showy glass pendants, red plush, parlor chromos and antimacassars. The period was full of a pessimistic resignation (the note popularized by Fitzgerald's Omar Khayyám) and a kind of negation which, refusing to see any glamour in the present world, turned to the Middle Ages, to King Arthur, to the legend of Troy—to the suave surroundings of a dream-world instead of the hard contours of actual experience.

At its worst, it was a period of smugness, of placid and pious sentimentality—epitomized by the rhymed sermons of Martin Farquhar Tupper, whose *Proverbial Philosophy* was devoured, with all its cloying and indigestible sweetmeats, by tens of thousands. The same tendency is apparent, though far less objectionably, in the moralizing lays of Lord Thomas Macaulay, in the theatrically emotionalized verses of Robert

Buchanan, Edwin Arnold and Sir Lewis Morris—even in the lesser later work of Alfred Lord Tennyson.

The poets of a generation before this time were fired with such ideas as freedom, an awed adoration of nature, an insatiable hunger for truth in all its forms and manifestations. The characteristic poets of the Victorian Era, says Max Plowman, "wrote under the dominance of churchliness, of 'sweetness and light,' and a thousand lesser theories that have not truth but comfort for their end."

The revolt against the tawdriness of the period had already begun; the best of Victorianism can be found not in men who were typically Victorian, but in pioneers like Browning and spirits like Swinburne, Rossetti, William Morris, who were completely out of sympathy with their time.

### THE PRE-RAPHAELITES AND SWINBURNE

That band of painters and poets who called themselves quaintly The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood hurried the demise of Victorianism. Their work was a continual denial of its forms; their poems aspired to be paintings, their paintings poems. Under the leadership of William Morris The Pre-Raphaelites enlisted the coöperation of Burne-Jones, the Rossettis and the insecure loyalty of Swinburne. Morris, the most practical member of the group, sought to make over an entire culture; he designed everything from chintzes to stained-glass windows, created furniture, wrought iron, printed books, manufactured glass, needlework, tapestries, tools—all as a protest against the rapid commercialism of a period whose prosperity was essentially shoddy. Morris was a consistent protestant in his poetry and his politics. In the rôle of poet he rebuked the smallness of his times with epics like *The Earthly Paradise;* in the rôle of propagandist he answered narrow individualism with *News from Nowhere,* picturing an ideal England in which the principles of communism had triumphed. Here Morris, dreaming of a medieval Utopia, confused the future with the past. With a simplicity surpassed only by his energy, he turned back to passion in suits of antique armor and to gallants whose heroism was suspiciously like heroics.

Morris failed, partly because the trend toward standardized production was too sweeping to take account of his theories,

partly because he himself was not so much concerned with humanity as with things. He advocated a knightly Socialism not because it would make a more beautiful race but more decorative objects. His sagas show that his preoccupation was with literature instead of life; and, by an ungrateful paradox, a literature that is preferred to life has a swift mortality.

Swinburne suffered from a similar defect. Flying from the prim domesticity sanctified by Tennyson, Swinburne rushed to the unholy (and purely literary) arms of Dolores, Faustine, Félise, Fragoletta, to the neo-paganism of *Atalanta in Calydon*, to the lush intransigence of *Songs before Sunrise*, to Gautier and Hugo and Baudelaire, to a quick succession of enthusiasms and influences. But it was neither Swinburne's political convictions nor his vaguely revolutionary tendencies which made the young men of his day go about "chanting to one another these new, astonishing melodies." It was his mastery of the lightning phrase, cutting through murky philosophizing; it was his wave-like rhythms rising and crashing on startled shores; it was his headlong fervor coming immediately after a decade of cautious hesitancy. Most of all, from a literary-historical point of view, it was his technique which affected the entire conception of English metrics. English poetry had been slavishly devoted to its norm, the *iamb;* Swinburne, by a lavish use of the dactyl, the choriambus and the anapest, gave poetry a new motion, a polyphonic freedom, an orchestral sweep and sonority. He enlarged the potentialities of English prosody. "Nor," writes Edmund Gosse, "was his singular vogue due only to this extraordinary metrical ingenuity; the effect of his artistic personality was itself intoxicating, even delirious. He was the poet of youth insurgent against all the restraints of conventionality and custom."

### RISE AND DECLINE OF THE ESTHETIC PHILOSOPHY

A further, if more limited, revolt ensued. Oscar Wilde, dilettante *de luxe*, attempted to make the 'Nineties draw up an esthetic declaration of independence; the beauty they championed, taking a leaf from the French symbolists, was to be "its own excuse for being." Wilde's was, in the most outspoken manner, the first use of estheticism as a slogan; the battle-cry of the group was actually the now outworn but then revolu-

tionary "Art for Art's sake"! And, so sick were people of the pinchbeck ornaments of the immediate past, that the slogan won. At least, temporarily.

*The Yellow Book*, the organ of the révoltés, appeared (1894-1897), representing a reasoned if limited reaction. The Rhymers' Club was the nucleus and its members—among them Ernest Dowson, Lionel Johnson, Victor Plarr, John Davidson, Arthur Symons, W. B. Yeats—met at the Cheshire Cheese where, over their cakes and ale, they fondly hoped to restore the spirit of the Elizabethan age. Unfortunately they lacked both the gusto and the initiative of their Mermaid Tavern models. Where the Elizabethans were all for size, the sad young men were all for subtlety; instead of being large and careless, they were cramped and self-conscious, writing with one eye on the British public which they hoped to startle, and the other on the French poets whom they hoped to impress. But, underneath the desire to shock the middle-classes, their standards were as prescribed as those they derided. To be mildly heretical was their unwritten orthodoxy; instead of being sentimental about virgins they were sentimental about street-walkers.

Until its collapse after the trial of Wilde, the Esthetic Movement gathered a show of strength which was, however, weakened by its central fallacy. It tried to drag life down to literature instead of bringing literature up to life. The young men's prophet was Walter Pater; their stronghold the ivory tower; their program a mixture of Greek-Anglican intellectuality and Parnassian impressionism. "But," as C. E. Andrews and M. O. Percival point out in *Poetry of the Nineties*, "they left behind the intellectual side of Pater, and the gem-like flame was fed purely by emotions. The esthetes' search for beauty became a search for sensations. They did not face the whole of life . . . but they selected from life its strange colors and its strange experiences. They loved to see in the real world glimpses that *seemed* exotic and remote."

Almost the first act of the "new" men was to rouse and outrage their immediate predecessors. This end-of-the-century desire to shock, which was so strong and natural an impulse, still has a place of its own—as an antidote. Mid-Victorian propriety and self-satisfaction crumbled under the swift audacities of rebellious spirits. The old walls fell; the public, once so apathetic to *belles-lettres*, was more than attentive to every

phase of literary experimentation. The last decade of the nineteenth century was so tolerant of novelty in art and ideas, that it would seem, says Holbrook Jackson in his penetrative summary, *The Eighteen-Nineties*, "as though the declining century wished to make amends for several decades of artistic monotony. It may indeed be something more than a coincidence that placed this decade at the close of a century, and *fin de siècle* may have been at once a swan song and a deathbed repentance."

Thereafter, the movement (if such it may be called), surfeited with its own excesses, fell into the mere poses of revolt; it degenerated into a half-hearted defense of artificialities.

It scarcely needed W. S. Gilbert (in *Patience*) or Robert Hichens (in *The Green Carnation*) to satirize its distorted attitudinizing. It strained itself to death; it became its own burlesque of the bizarre, an extravaganza of extravagance. "The period" (I am again quoting Holbrook Jackson) "was as certainly a period of decadence as it was a period of renaissance. The decadence was to be seen in a perverse and finicking glorification of the fine arts and mere artistic virtuosity on the one hand, and a militant commercial movement on the other. . . . The eroticism which became so prevalent in the verse of many of the younger poets was minor because it was little more than a pose—not because it was erotic. . . . It was a passing mood which gave the poetry of the hour a hothouse fragrance; a perfume faint, yet unmistakable and strange."

But most of the elegant and disillusioned young men overshot their mark. Vulgar health reasserted itself; an inherent though long repressed vitality sought new channels. Arthur Symons deserted his hectic Muse, Richard Le Gallienne abandoned his preciosity, and the group began to disintegrate. The esthetic philosophy was wearing thin; it had already begun to fray and reveal its essential shabbiness. Wilde, himself, possessed the three things which he said the English would never forgive—youth, power and enthusiasm. But in trying to make an exclusive cult of beauty, Wilde had also tried to make it evade actuality; he urged that art should not, in any sense, be a part of life but an escape from it. "The proper school to learn art in is not Life—but Art." And in the same essay ("The Decay of Lying") he wrote, "All bad Art comes from returning to Life and Nature, and elevating them into ideals." Else-

where he declared his motto: "The first duty in life is to be as artificial as possible. What the second duty is no one has discovered."

Such a cynical and, in essence, silly philosophy could not go unchallenged. Its snobbish fastidiousness, its pale pretense was bound to arouse the red blood of common reality. This negative attitude received its answer in the work of that determined yea-sayer, W. E. Henley.

### WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

Henley repudiated this languid estheticism; he scorned a mincing art which was out of touch with the world. His was a large and sweeping affirmation. He felt that mere existence was glorious: life was coarse, difficult, often dangerous and dirty, but splendid at the heart. Art, he knew, could not be separated from the dreams and hungers of man; it could not flourish only on its own essences or technical accomplishments. To live, poetry would have to share the fears, angers, hopes and struggles of the prosaic world. So Henley came like a salt breeze blowing through a perfumed, heavily screened studio. He sang loudly (often, indeed, too loudly) of the joy of living and the courage of the "unconquerable soul." He was a powerful influence not only as a poet but as a critic and editor. In the latter capacity he gathered about him such men as Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, Thomas Hardy, H. G. Wells, W. B. Yeats, T. E. Brown, J. M. Barrie. None of these men were his disciples, some were much older, but none came into contact with him without being influenced in some way by his sharp and positive personality. A pioneer and something of a prophet, he was one of the first to champion the paintings of Whistler and to proclaim the genius of Rodin.

Historically considered, Henley represents another transition; his is the bridge between the large if loose optimism of Browning and the applied imperialism of Kipling. Both extremes find a voice—and a prolonged one—in his work. "Life! More life!" he shouted with the over-eagerness of one afflicted by physical infirmities. "More life!"—particularly English life which, with the authority of sword and gospel, must be broadcast over both hemispheres—but life, no matter how undisciplined, at any cost . . . and the more boisterous the better.

Life—give me life until the end,
That at the very top of being,
The battle-spirit shouting in my blood,
Out of the reddest hell of the fight
I may be snatched and flung
Into the everlasting lull,
The immortal, incommunicable dream.

But Henley's verse is not always shrill. When he forgot to be muscular, he fashioned ballades and rondeaus with a dexterity scarcely surpassed by Swinburne, lyrics of surprisingly delicate texture, free verse that anticipated a movement two generations later, and "voluntaries" of the city on the Thames with Whistlerian glamour. Further than that, Henley's noisy periods are redeemed by his passionate enthusiasm for nobility in whatever cause it was joined. He loved the world in all its moods. Bus-drivers, hospital interiors, scrubwomen, a panting train, the mystery and squalor of London's alleys, all found a voice in his lines; his later work contains more than a hint of the delight in science and machinery which was later to be sounded more fully in the work of Rudyard Kipling.

### THE CELTIC REVIVAL AND J. M. SYNGE

In 1889, William Butler Yeats published his *Wanderings of Oisin;* in the same year Douglas Hyde, scholar and folk-lorist, brought out his *Book of Gaelic Stories.*

The revival of Gaelic and the renascence of Irish literature may be said to date from the publication of those two books. The fundamental idea of both men and their followers was the same. It was to create a literature which would express the national consciousness of Ireland through a purely national art. They began to reflect the strange background of dreams, politics, hopelessness and heroism which is proverbially Irish. This community of fellowship and aims is to be found in the varied but allied work of William Butler Yeats, "Æ." (George W. Russell), Moira O'Neill, Lionel Johnson, Katharine Tynan, Padraic Colum and others. The first fervor gone, a period of dullness set in. After reanimating the old myths, surcharging the legendary heroes with a new significance, it seemed that the movement was losing itself in a literary mysticism. But there followed an increasing concern with the peas-

ant, the migratory laborer, the tramp; an interest that was something of a reaction against the influence of Yeats and his too arbitrary, over-symbolized otherworldliness. In 1904, the Celtic Revival reached its height with John Millington Synge, who was not only the greatest dramatist of the Irish Theatre, but (to quote such contrary critics as George Moore and Harold Williams) "one of the greatest dramatists who has written in English." Synge's poetry, brusque and all too small in quantity, was a minor occupation with him, yet the quality and power of it is unmistakable. Its content is never great, but the raw vigor in it was to serve as a bold banner—a sort of a brilliant Jolly Roger—for the younger men of a subsequent period. It was not only this dramatist's brief verses and his intensely musical prose but his sharp prefaces which were to exercise his readers.

In the introduction to the *Playboy of the Western World,* Synge declared, "When I was writing *The Shadow of the Glen* some years ago, I got more aid than any learning could have given me from a chink in the floor of the old Wicklow house where I was staying that let me hear what was being said by the servant girls in the kitchen. This matter is, I think, of some importance; for in countries where the imagination of the people and the language they use, is rich and living, it is possible for a writer to be rich and copious in his words—and at the same time to give the reality which is at the root of all poetry, in a natural and comprehensive form." This not only explains Synge's impulse but his idiom, possibly the raciest in modern literature.

Synge's poetic power is unquestionably greatest in his plays. In *The Well of the Saints, The Playboy of the Western World* and *Riders to the Sea* there is more beauty of form, more richness of language than in any piece of dramatic writing since the Elizabethans. Yeats, when he first heard Synge's early one-act play, *The Shadow of the Glen,* is said to have exclaimed "Euripides." A half year later when Synge read him *Riders to the Sea,* Yeats again confined his enthusiasm to a single word:—"Aeschylus!" The years have shown that Yeats's exaggeration was not wholly a compatriot's *beau geste.*

Although Synge's poetry was not his major concern, numbering only twenty-four original pieces and eighteen translations, it had a surprising effect. It marked a point of departure,

a reaction against the too-polished verse of his immediate predecessors as well as the dehumanized mysticism of many of his associates. In that memorable preface to his *Poems* he wrote what was a manifesto and at the same time a classic *credo* for all that called itself the "new" poetry. "I have often thought," it begins, "that at the side of poetic diction, which every one condemns, modern verse contains a great deal of poetic material, using 'poetic' in the same special sense. The poetry of exaltation will be always the highest, but when men lose their poetic feeling for ordinary life and cannot write poetry of ordinary things, their exalted poetry is likely to lose its strength of exaltation in the way that men cease to build beautiful churches when they have lost happiness in building shops. . . . Even if we grant that exalted poetry can be kept successfully by itself, the strong things of life are needed in poetry also, to show that what is exalted or tender is not made by feeble blood."

### RUDYARD KIPLING

New tendencies are contagious. But they also disclose themselves simultaneously in places and people where there has been no point of contact. Even before Synge proclaimed the wild loveliness in casual life, Kipling was illuminating, in a totally different manner, the wealth of poetic material in things hitherto regarded as too commonplace for poetry. Before literary England had quite recovered from a surfeit of Victorian priggishness and Pre-Raphaelite preciosity, the young Kipling came out of India with high spirits and a great tide of life, sweeping all before him. An obscure Anglo-Indian journalist, the publication of his *Barrack-room Ballads* in 1892 brought him sudden notice. By 1895, he was internationally famous. Plunging through the past as through a withered underbrush, he sprang into the open field of the present. Its mechanical obstacles did not deter him. Kipling gloried in the material world; he did more—he glorified it. He pierced the tough exteriors of seemingly prosaic things—things like machinery, bridge-building, cockney soldiers, slang, steam, the dirty by-products of science (witness "M'Andrews Hymn" and "The Bell Buoy")—and uncovered their hidden glamour. "Romance is gone," sighed most of his contemporaries,

. . . and all unseen
Romance brought up the nine-fifteen.

That sentence (from his poem "The King") furnishes the key to his idiom; it explains how, without theories or technical innovations, the author of *The Five Nations* helped rejuvenate English verse.

Reality is Kipling's romanticism; he rolls drums and sounds clarions for another "crowded hour of glorious life." But it is not Henley's abstraction for which Kipling fills his fife; he composes marches for soldiers, explorers, mechanics, foot-sloggers—for life which is no emotional generality, but life in action. Motion itself is apostrophized in his verse. Where the world is going is of no particular concern to Kipling; the fact that it moves is all-sufficient.

Kipling, with his perception of ordinary people in terms of ordinary life, is one of the strongest links between the Wordsworth-Browning era and the apostles of vigor, beginning with Masefield. There are serious defects in Kipling's work, particularly in his more facile poetry. He falls into a journalistic ease with a tendency to jingle; he is fond of a militaristic drum-banging that is as blatant as the insularity he condemns. But a burning if bland faith shines through his dogmas. His best work vibrates with an intensity that transforms the once tawdry, that lifts the vulgar and incidental to the universal—the universal, that is, in terms of the British Empire.

### JOHN MASEFIELD

All art is a twofold reviving—a re-appraisal of subject and a reanimating of form. Poetry becomes perennially "new" by returning to the old—with a different consciousness, a greater awareness. In 1911, when art was again searching for novelty, John Masefield created something startling and new by going back to 1385 and *The Canterbury Pilgrims*. Employing both the Chaucerian model and a form similar to the practically forgotten Byronic stanza, Masefield wrote in rapid succession, *The Everlasting Mercy* (1911), *The Widow in the Bye Street* (1912), *Dauber* (1912), *The Daffodil Fields* (1913)—four astonishing rhymed narratives and four of the most remarkable poems of his generation. Expressive of every rugged

phase of life, these poems, uniting old and new manners, responded to Synge's proclamation that "the strong things of life are needed in poetry also . . . and it may almost be said that before verse can be human again it must be brutal."

Masefield brought back to poetry that mixture of beauty and brutality which is its most human and enduring quality. He brought back that rich and almost vulgar vividness which is the life-blood of Chaucer, of Shakespeare, of Burns, of Villon, of Heine—and of all those who were not only great artists but great humanists. As a purely descriptive poet, he can take his place with the masters of sea- and landscape. As an imaginative realist, he showed those who were stumbling from one wild eccentricity to another, that humanity itself was wilder, stranger, far more thrilling than anything in the world—or out of it. Few things in contemporary poetry are as powerful as the regeneration of Saul Kane (in *The Everlasting Mercy*) or the story of *Dauber*, the tale of a tragic sea-voyage and a dreamer who wanted to be a painter. The vigorous description of rounding Cape Horn in the latter poem is a masterpiece in itself. Masefield's later volumes are quieter in tone, more measured in technique; there is a genuinely religious ring to many of his Shakespearean sonnets. But the swinging surge is in all his work from *Salt Water Ballads* (1902) to *Reynard the Fox* (1919).

### THE WAR AND THE GEORGIANS

In 1914, the line of demarcation between Masefield and the younger men was not sharp. Realism was again in the ascendancy. So definite a style as Masefield's was bound to be imitated. It even attracted W. W. Gibson who deserted bowery arcades to follow the rude trail Masefield had blazed. Gibson reënforced the interest in actuality by turning from a preoccupation with shining knights, faultless queens, ladies in distress, and all the paraphernalia of hackneyed medieval romances, to write about ferrymen, berry-pickers, stone-cutters, farmers, printers, circus-men, carpenters—dramatizing (and sometimes theatricalizing) the primitive emotions of ordinary people in *Livelihood, Daily Bread* and *Fires*. Candor had been asking new questions. It found unexpected answers in the war; repressed emotionalism discovered a new and terrible outlet.

The first volume of the biennial *Georgian Poetry* had just appeared when the war caught up the youth of England in a gust of national fervor. Not only the young men but their seniors joined what seemed then to be "the Great Adventure," only to find that it was, as one of them has since called it, "the Late Great Nightmare." After the early flush of romanticism had passed, the voices of bitter disillusion were heard. Not at first, for the censorship was omnipresent. But Siegfried Sassoon's fierce satires and burning denunciations could not be stilled, the mocking lines of Robert Graves began to be quoted, Wilfred Owen's posthumous poems painted a picture the very opposite of the journalistic jingo verses which attempted to paint civilization's greatest horror in bright and cheerful colors.

Recently, in an article on a similar theme, Graves wrote: "The poetry written by actual soldiers is perhaps too familiar for discussion, but we may remind ourselves of one or two outstanding facts usually overlooked: that Rupert Brooke saw many warlike scenes but no actual fighting, that Robert Nichols, with the best of intentions, only saw three weeks' service in France and this on a quiet sector with the artillery: that of the other poets with reputations as War-poets not more than four or five (including Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen who was killed just before the Armistice, Isaac Rosenberg, Edmund Blunden and Herbert Read) bore the heat and burden of the War; and that these unanimously vilified rather than celebrated the War: and that of these only Siegfried Sassoon published his verse while the War was still on."

Rupert Brooke, the most popular of his group, remains, in most minds, as the type of romantic warrior; a symbolic figure not uncommon at the beginning of the War. But his poetry, as well as his correspondence, contains evidence that, had he survived the first few years of warfare, his verse—had he written at all—would have been akin to the unromanticized passion of those who, like Sassoon and Owen, saw the horror at close range and at length. Even his comrade, Charles Hamilton Sorley, that marvelous boy killed at twenty, hearing the news of Brooke's enlistment, wrote: "Rupert Brooke is far too obsessed with his own sacrifice, regarding the going to war of himself (and others) as a highly intense, remarkable and sacrificial exploit, whereas it is merely the conduct demanded

of him (and others) by the turn of circumstances, where non-compliance with this demand would have made life intolerable. He has clothed his attitude in fine words: but his is, nevertheless, the sentimental attitude."

The effect of the War on the older and more established poets was definite if less direct. The Georgian group issued two more volumes (there were five in all, the last being *Georgian Poetry 1920-1922*), but the spirit had gone out of it. Rupert Brooke and Edward Thomas had been silenced by death. The work of Walter de la Mare grew increasingly somber; John Masefield no longer contributed; D. H. Lawrence—never a Georgian at heart and admitted to the volumes with a few circumspect poems—turned to prose; Lascelles Abercrombie wrote little after 1919; Ralph Hodgson ceased to write at all. Only W. H. Davies, living in a world which, seemingly common-pastoral, was really a world of his own, continued to warble his delighted, thought-free bird-notes. The loss to the group of these men—or the loss of their power—was not compensated by the addition of Martin Armstrong, William Kerr, V. Sackville-West, J. D. C. Pellow, Edward Shanks, Thomas Moult and other fashioners of what Sassoon called "crocus-crowded lyrics."

### AFTERMATH

Peace brought back but few of the younger poets. The most brilliant of them, Charles Hamilton Sorley, was killed on the threshold of an indubitably great future. The career of Isaac Rosenberg, author of an amazing poetic drama, was ended almost before it had begun. Rupert Brooke died in the midst of his singing; so did Edward Thomas, Francis Ledwidge, Cameron Wilson. Wilfred Owen was struck down just as he had found his own full-throated utterance. It is impossible to calculate how much has been lost to English poetry by the death of these singers.

One after-effect was particularly noticeable. English literature suffered not only from individual losses but from general shock. This shock affected the writers of every school and diverted where it did not arrest the current of contemporary verse. It threw Masefield back to the classic drama of half a century ago; it silenced such of its War-poets who refused to

continue to write about "the collective madness" and yet could think of little else. It created the sharp division between the new group of English pastoral poets and the still younger intellectuals. The reactions of the two contradictory movements are easy to understand. Wishing to escape the mechanistic urban civilization which had scarred Europe with ruins, many of the poets turned hopefully to the traditional curlew-calling, plover-haunted English countryside. The machine is a dead thing spreading death, they cried; only the soil brings forth. "We have had enough of destructive ingenuities; let us go back to creative simplicities." Following, more or less consciously, the example of that genuinely naïf poet, W. H. Davies, a small cohort of writers began to sing exclusively about the charms of childhood, sunsets and rural delights. But where Davies's innocence is natural and deep, the simplicity of most of the pastoral Georgians is predetermined and superficial. Much of the resulting poetry is inspired by the wish to avoid past memories rather than by a spontaneous affection for the present scene; much of it, indeed, seems a sort of spiritual convalescence. In some instances, it becomes a *reductio ad absurdum*, a literary affectation that leads one of these artificial shepherds to write such unconsciously comic strophes as:

> I lingered at a gate and talked
> A little with a lonely lamb.
> He told me of the great still night,
> Of calm starlight,
> And of the lady moon, who'd stoop
> For a kiss sometimes. . . .
> Of how, when sheep grew old,
> As their faith told
> They went without a pang
> To far green fields, where fall
> Perpetual streams that call
> To deathless nightingales.

These fatuous, cliché-crammed stanzas, duly enshrined in the Georgian anthologies, are typical of the worst phase of this movement. But the true pastoral note is not without its singers. The bucolics of Edmund Blunden, W. J. Turner, Frank Prewett and others contain a quality which makes the verses interesting, especially in view of the conditions which caused them.

### THE "LITERATURE OF NERVES"

Opposed to the rustic tendency, a group emerged headed by the three Sitwells. Strongly influenced by the work of T. S. Eliot and revolting from the false naïveté of the Georgians—particularly that part of it dominated by J. C. Squire of the *London Mercury* and derisively nicknamed the Squirearchy—the expression at first took the form of satire. Sometimes the burlesque was broad, sometimes the allusions were so erudite and private that only the initiate found them intelligible. But their poetry was not always compounded of wildness prepense; it was mad only north-north-west, and soon it became evident that what they had to say was of particular significance to their times. Their patently artificial figures began to breathe; their pastiche was humanized. Nostalgia welled up beneath the elegances, reminiscent of the 'Nineties, and (again reminding us of the *fin de siècle* esthetes) this yearning back to a happier world clothed itself in foreign symbolism. Differing from the Parnassian poets, they did not depict their objects—or objectives—by direct statement; like the Symbolists, they relied on the power of elision and suggestion, compelling readers to participate in the process of creation, making them fill the gaps between thought and figure, between meaning and mystery. They would have agreed with Jules Huret who insisted,

> It is the perfect use of this mystery that constitutes the symbol: little by little to evoke an object in order to show a condition of the mind; or inversely to choose an object, and from it to disengage a state of the mind by a series of decipherings. . . . There should always be an enigma in poetry, and the aim of literature—it has no other—is to evoke objects.

The movement, as may be deduced, was primarily intellectual; though it developed an emotionalism, or at least a state of feeling of its own, it was bound to arbitrary tenets. But Edith Sitwell, the creator, triumphed over the tenets of Edith Sitwell, the theorist. The poet Herbert Read was not always in agreement with the critic Herbert Read, who attempted to resolve the old dispute by saying "Poetry is creative expression: Prose is constructive expression," maintaining "we now see

that poetry may inhere in a single word, in a single syllable, and may therefore in an extreme case be without rhythm."

For several years the "anti-Georgians" sent up rockets of savage and esoteric brilliance. Nor did all of these explosions end in a shower of burnt sticks. Whatever their defects, they were faults of excess—more acceptable than the extravagances of dearth—and their idiom (particularly Edith Sitwell's and Peter Quennell's) was like no other's. Much of it, high-pitched and exacerbated, belongs to the literature of nerves. But its implicit challenge is always provocative, sometimes thrilling and never dull.

SUMMARY

Though several of the best known poets appeared in the Georgian anthologies, most of those who won favor after 1912 belong to no actual group and cannot be classified. Yet no account of the first part of the century would be complete without a tribute to the glorified nursery rhymes and moon-soaked fantasies of Walter de la Mare, the limpid and unperturbed lyrics of Ralph Hodgson, the brooding nobilities of Charlotte Mew, the fretted energy of Anna Wickham, the whimsical tunes of James Stephens, the nimble versatility of Humbert Wolfe, the fierce and uncompromising introspections of D. H. Lawrence.

*

This collection is a companion volume to *Modern American Poetry*, the period covered by both volumes being the same. The two books aim to give a fairly complete picture of the two branches of our literature, revealing many contrasts and a few general differences. Broadly speaking, modern British poetry is smoother, more matured, and, molded by centuries of literature, richer in associations. American poetry, no longer colonially imitative, is sharper, more vigorously experimental; it is full of youth, with youth's occasional (and natural) crudities. Where the English product is formulated, precise and (in spite of a few fluctuations) true to its past, the American expression is more varied and—being the reflection of partly indigenous, partly naturalized and largely unassimilated ideas and temperaments—is characteristically uncoördinated. American poetry might be described as a rush of unconnected mountain torrents and valley streams; instead of one placidly mov-

ing body, there are a dozen turbulent currents. English poetry, on the other hand, may be compared to a broad and luxuriating river with a series of tributaries contributing to the now thinning, now widening channel.

It is, I believe, salutary to observe how the course of poetry in Great Britain has been deflected temporarily in the last forty years, how it has swung from one tendency toward another, and how, for all its bends and twists, it has lost neither its strength nor its direction.

L. U.

## CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

Christina Georgina Rossetti, was born in London, December 5, 1830. She was the youngest of the four children of Frances Mary Lavinia (Polidori) and Gabriele Rossetti, an Italian poet, exile and professor at King's College. The entire family was unusually creative as well as scholarly. Her father, an authority on Italian literature, had published a volume of religious verse in 1852; Dante Gabriel Rossetti, her oldest brother, established his reputation in painting as well as literature; her second brother, William Michael, was an essayist and man of letters; her older sister Maria Francesca, who later became an Anglican nun, was known for a searching commentary, *Shadow of Dante*, probably influenced by her father.

Christina grew up in London, "enjoying," says Edmund Gosse, "the advantages and disadvantages of the strange society of Italian exiles and English eccentrics which her father gathered about him." The first mention of her name in the letters of her family shows her a poet at the age of twelve, Christina having contributed two poems to a magazine edited by her brothers. At eighteen (after having followed the Rossetti tradition of verse-and-picture-making) she posed for the Virgin in Dante Gabriel's first important picture. Infected from the cradle with over-seriousness, the child was preoccupied to the point of morbidity, delicate in health, detached in manner. "I was," she wrote many years later, "a very melancholy girl," and this early gravity gave her features that typical Pre-Raphaelite sadness which made her a fitting model for her brother as well as his confrères, Millais, Madox-Brown and Holman Hunt.

Although she admired her father, it was her mother—and her mother's image reflected in her sister—that she worshiped. She actually applauded Maria Francesca's refusal to look at the mummies in the British Museum "because she realized how the general Resurrection might happen even as she looked at those solemn corpses turned into a sight for sight-seers."

When she was seventeen her grandfather, Gaetano Polidori, privately printed her first volume, *Verses*. A year later she met James Collinson, a minor painter of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood whom Dante Gabriel considered "a stunner," and became engaged

to him. Biographers have been unable to agree as to which of Christina's two attachments affected her most. Edmund Gosse says distinctly, "She was twice sought in marriage, but each time, from religious scruples, she refused her suitor; on the *former* of these occasions she sorrowed greatly and her suffering is reflected in much of her song." Her brother, William Michael, corroborates this, in his Memoir: "He (Collinson) had struck a staggering blow at Christina Rossetti's peace of mind on the very threshold of womanly life." But Elizabeth Luther Cary is of another opinion. With a reticence abnormal in a biographer, Mrs. Cary, refusing to give the name of either man, contents herself with: "In 1866 at the age of thirty-six,[1] she again suffered from her deep interest in a suitor, whom she could not marry owing to her religious scruples. This incident, which involved a genuine and strong attachment, is probably responsible for what is most moving and most exquisite in her poetry."

Twice, then, Christina refused to marry because of "religious scruples." Collinson, originally a member of the Church of England, had been converted to Catholicism, reverted to the English Church at Christina's request, and (possibly because he had religious scruples of his own) 'verted once more to Catholicism. And though Christina was a member of the Tractarian or Anglo-Catholic party, she would have none of him. But the case of Cayley, whom she loved, says her brother, "to the last days of his life, December 5, 1883," is more inexplicable. Cayley was of the same denomination as Christina and was "a singularly unworldly person." Yet their love was not consummated. Although Cayley was religious he was evidently not religious enough. "She loved him deeply and permanently, but," W. M. Rossetti remarks vaguely, "she must no doubt have probed his faith and found it either wrong or woefully defective." It needs no analyst to furnish the obvious clew not only to Christina's withdrawal from marriage, but, as evidenced in poem after poem, from the normal give and take of life. She could not surrender to any earthly lover for she was committed—at first half-consciously, later candidly—to the Heavenly Bridegroom. She turned from the hands of Collinson and Cayley to the arms of Christ the more easily since, to her fixed faith, abnegation and affirmation were one. Her religion was "far more a thing of the heart than of the mind: she clung to and

[1] This is not in accord with W. M. Rossetti's dates. "I must next deal," he writes, "with a personage of higher type, Charles Bagot Cayley, a man of letters and an author, but less author than scholar. Christina may have first known him as far back as 1847 or so, and again in 1854; but the two did not meet much until some such date as 1860." Christina was, at the latest, not quite thirty when she became intimate with Cayley.

loved the Christian creed because she loved Jesus Christ." But even here her love was shame-faced, saintly but not serene. Unlike her sister Maria, whom she followed to the very threshold of the convent, she was confident neither of self nor salvation; she remained uncertain, unworthy. As she grew older, she retreated further and further into self-abasement. Her days were a succession of perpetual church-goings and communions, prayers and fasts, submission to clerical direction, oblations, confessions, literally hundreds of hymns, "Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims," and devotional verses whose sincerity cannot conceal their mawkish reiterations.

Meanwhile, without the slightest ambition for literary prominence, she had become established as one of the period's undoubted poets. At thirty-two she published *Goblin Market* (1862); four years later, *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems* (1866) appeared. Both volumes were widely circulated and applauded. At that time her poetry (now seen to be made of far finer substance than her brother's) was considered inferior to Dante Gabriel's—an opinion in which she concurred. It was natural that she should carry spiritual humility into her literary life, and she depreciated herself at every opportunity. In her introductory paragraph to the "Monna Innominata" sequence, she refers to Mrs. Browning as "the Great Poetess of our own day and nation," preferring the limp ardor of the "Portuguese" sonnets—those over-colored and heavily drooping wax-flowers—to her own pulsating quatorzains. But uncritical self-depreciation (not "over-scrupulosity" as her brother averred) was her weakness. Invited to contribute to a volume of *Representative Poems of Living Poets* in 1886, she chose only three: "A Christmas Carol," "An Apple Gathering" and "No, Thank You, John," the last two being as unrepresentative, and as unlovely, as anything she ever wrote.

It is impossible to say how many poems she wrote; a scant thousand are published in her *Collected Poems*. But, though numerous volumes appeared, her first two books contain most of her best. "Goblin Market" is her fairy-child, unlike anything she ever conceived. It has something of "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" combined with an unearthly color which is less light than translucence; it is Hans Christian Andersen played on an elfin flute. "The narrative," concluded the *London Quarterly Review*, "has so matter-of-fact and at the same time so bewildering an air, that we are fairly puzzled into acceptance of everything." Too long to reprint in these pages, attention must be called to its appropriately goblin-hopping rhythm; its childish legend and most unchildish moral; its catalogue of fruits, so tropical in imagery and so exact in epithet as to summon particularities of taste; and to its very Pre-

Raphaelite picture of the two sisters, as lingering as the drawing of the younger:

> White and golden Lizzie stood,
> Like a lily in a flood,
> Like a rock of blue-veined stone
> Lashed by tides obstreperously,—
> Like a beacon left alone
> In a hoary roaring sea,
> Sending up a golden fire.
> Like a fruit-crowned orange-tree
> White with blossoms honey-sweet
> Sore beset by wasp and bee,—
> Like a royal virgin town
> Topped with gilded dome and spire
> Close beleaguered by a fleet
> Mad to tug her standard down.

The contrast between "Goblin Market" and all her other poems is startling. With one or two exceptions ("A Birthday" is one of them) the light spirit is gone; the nimble pace slows down to a measured solemnity. The prevailing note is melancholy—a sadness that searches the soul but never probes the intellect. She had the habit of questioning, one might say, without curiosity. "Faith with her," says W. M. Rossetti, "was faith pure and absolute: an entire acceptance of a thing revealed, not a quest for confirmation or demonstrative proof. . . . Her attitude of mind was 'I believe because I am told to believe, and I know that the authority which tells me to believe is the only real authority, God.'"

This unreserved acceptance of dogma sharply differentiates Christina Rossetti from her transatlantic contemporary, Emily Dickinson, with whom she has been compared. Apart from the American's imagery and idiom, difficult enough to the Englishwoman, Christina would have been outraged at the attitude of the protesting Puritan; the style would have been incomprehensible, the spirit incredible. Here was a woman—presumably a Christian—who not only challenged her God, but dared interrogate, tease, berate, rally and fling herself upon him. Emily's flippant intimacy would have seemed no less than purposeful blasphemy. Yet it was Emily Dickinson, not Christina Rossetti, who was the true mystic. Christina absorbed her faith, Emily translated it. Christina was devout, uplifted, sometimes *exalté;* Emily was impertinent, indirect, and always the metaphysician. Christina, continually submerging her personality, wrote only what might please her Creator; Emily, individual to the point of refusing a public, wrote only to please herself. One returned to God, with passionate meekness, all she had learned from Him; the other, less submissive, gave

Him back a conception of Himself that was a separate creation. That Emily Dickinson's was the more original and entertaining genius—that, as a poet, she exercises a more impelling influence is, I think, indubitable. But it is equally plain that in her rare moments Christina Rossetti attained purer vision and serener heights. There is nobility surpassing charm of epithet, power beyond surprise or eloquence in the ecstatic "From House to Home"—which in concept and dimension is in the line of major poetry—in "Marvel of Marvels," in "Passing Away," of which Swinburne wrote, "It is so much the noblest sacred poem in our language that there is none which comes near enough to stand second."

"Passing Away" is one of the poems which display Christina Rossetti's technical as well as spiritual excellencies. Here, as in "Marvel of Marvels" and others, she delights to ring the changes on an organ-point of rhyme, playing upon a set of strong open vowels as dexterously as the early Italian composers. Her style is traditionally *bel canto* although she does not disdain effects that are supposedly the product of our own generation. She employs balance with skill; uses repetition, that dangerous device, with complete security. Many of her lyrics are rich with adroit echoing, even a mocking, of similar sounds. Some of her finest sonnets (notably the one beginning "The irresponsive silence of the land") are achieved by the pairing of figures and the building up of tone on tone, the repeated word insinuating itself like a muffled but dramatic drum. Melodic grace lifts her preoccupations, whether they inform grave soliloquies or the inconsequential jingles of "Sing-Song," that mixture of delight and dogmatism in which an angel sings with the voice of Dr. Watts. Save at her best, she was not without mannerisms as irritating as Mrs. Browning's or Emily Dickinson's. She dwelt on her heartbreak, relied (poetically) on the broken reed. She was prone to pile up comparisons; some of her most admirable poems—such as "Goblin Market," an illustrative segment of which has been quoted, and "A Birthday"—are little more than a chain of threaded similes. She coddled her clichés; she never tired of writing about roses and lilies, always with the connotations of a minor poet, and of winter, which she saw only as something dismal and bitter.

But if this is true of her best, what is one to say of her worst? Here again, the paradox persists; first and fifth-rate mingle uncritically, inextricably. It is true that most of the "Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims," "Some Feasts and Fasts," "Gifts and Graces," "New Jerusalem and Its Citizens," etc., are endlessly lugubrious. Her hatred—or fear—of the world found complete expression in these dull but undoubtedly autobiographical confessions.

She gave up beauty in her tender youth,
Gave all her hope and joy and pleasant ways;
She covered up her eyes lest they should gaze
On vanity, and chose the bitter truth.
Harsh towards herself, towards other full of ruth,
Servant of servants, little known to praise,
Long prayers and fasts trenched on her nights and days:
She schooled herself to sights and sounds uncouth
That with the poor and stricken she might make
A home, until the least of all sufficed
Her wants; her own self learned she to forsake,
Counting all earthly gain but hurt and loss.
So with calm will she chose and bore the cross
And hated all for love of Jesus Christ.

This is the heart of her secret, if secret it may be called. The world—she says it over and over—is evil, being the abode of the flesh which is the devil. All which is terrestrial and impermanent is Vanity; worse, it is dalliance with sin. Sin (and let the Freudians make what they will of it) fascinated her; her poetry, intent though she was on the soul's salvation, "covered up her eyes" to its multiple manifestations. In prose she declared explicitly, "Strip sin bare from the voluptuousness of music, fascination of gesture, entrancement of the stage, rapture of poetry. . . . Let it stand out bald as the Ten Commandments. Lavish sympathy on the sinner, never on the sin." She, herself, baptized her infant nephew just before his death and "I doubt," her brother assures us, "whether any act of her life yielded her more heartfelt satisfaction."

But if her disposition grew fixedly Calvinistic and her character became "a fountain sealed," the impulse checked in action was spontaneous as ever in composition. Buried among the four hundred and fifty devotional pieces given to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, are some of the bitterest but most authentic verse she ever wrote. True, she reiterates with unvarying insistence, that life is not sweet, that the world is loathsome and foul, that death is merely sleeping from "risk," that earthly mornings are cold and all its twilights gray. But just when we would turn disheartened from these wailings in sackcloth, a voice, clear and compelling, makes us pause, and we know we are once more listening to the accents of authoritative poetry.

Christina Rossetti had suffered much of her life from a chronic weakness of heart. In 1892 she was operated for cancer, bearing the operation well. A year later it became evident that the disease had not been eradicated. It returned, complicated by dropsy. A further operation was impossible; palliatives were given; the end was foreseen. "At the close of a week of collapse and semi-consciousness, she died without a struggle, in the act of inarticulate

prayer." This was on December 29, 1894, just as she had turned sixty-four.

Her spirit persists, though scarcely in the way Christina might have foreseen. Saintliness by withdrawal is not a program which wins general response. Though the world turn from physics to metaphysics, Christina Rossetti can never be one of its prophets. She was an ascetic, not a mystic—a feminine ascetic lachrymose in preoccupation with death. Some of her noble verse is sullied with self-pity. But though she was not one of the world's prophets, she remains one of its undoubted poets—one of the three great women lyricists who wrote in English. She was the forerunner of a generation of women who learned from her the art of keeping expression simple and intense. Though not primarily a technician, and often too ready to rely on decorative generalities, her best work is so felicitous in music, so flexible a medium for emotion, that it has become a model of its kind. Lizette Woodworth Reese, Sara Teasdale and a score of others have gone to school to her; the inflection of Edna St. Vincent Millay is already anticipated in sonnets like "Because you never yet have loved me, dear." In Christina Rossetti the singer and the saint combined. But it was the singer who had the clearer, actually the more spiritual vision. The poetry opened vistas that could not be summoned by the repetition of a creed. The rapt ascetic bowed under a "strangling load"; the poet, winged in her rapture, escaped the yoke and set herself free.

## A BIRTHDAY

My heart is like a singing bird
  Whose nest is in a watered shoot;
My heart is like an apple-tree
  Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
  That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
  Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down;
  Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
  And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
  In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
  Is come, my love is come to me.

## "THE IRRESPONSIVE SILENCE OF THE LAND"

The irresponsive silence of the land,
The irresponsive sounding of the sea,
Speak both one message of one sense to me:—
"Aloof, aloof, we stand aloof; so stand
Thou too aloof bound with the flawless band
In inner solitude; we bind not thee.
But who from thy self-chain shall set thee free?
What heart shall touch thy heart? what hand thy hand?"—

And I am sometimes proud and sometimes meek,
And sometimes I remember days of old
When fellowship seemed not so far to seek
And all the world and I seemed much less cold,
And at the rainbow's foot lay surely gold,
And hope felt strong and life itself not weak.

## THE BOURNE

Underneath the growing grass,
  Underneath the living flowers,
  Deeper than the sound of showers:
  There we shall not count the hours
By the shadows as they pass.

Youth and health will be but vain,
  Beauty reckoned of no worth:
  There a very little girth
  Can hold round what once the earth
Seemed too narrow to contain.

## "COME BACK TO ME WHO WAIT AND WATCH"

Come back to me who wait and watch for you:—
Or come not yet, for it is over then,
And long it is before you come again,
So far between my pleasures are and few.
While, when you come not, what I do I do,
Thinking, "Now when he comes," my sweetest "when":
For one man is my world of all the men
This wide world holds; O love, my world is you.

Howbeit, to meet you grows almost a pang
Because the pang of parting comes so soon;
My hope hangs waning, waxing, like a moon
Between the heavenly days on which we meet:
Ah me, but where are now the songs I sang
When life was sweet because you called them sweet?

## MIRAGE

The hope I dreamed of was a dream,
  Was but a dream; and now I wake
Exceeding comfortless, and worn, and old,
  For a dream's sake.

Lie still, lie still, my breaking heart;
  My silent heart, lie still and break;
Life, and the world, and mine own self, are changed
  For a dream's sake.

## DREAM LAND

Where sunless rivers weep
Their waves into the deep,
She sleeps a charmèd sleep:
  Awake her not.
Led by a single star,
She came from very far
To seek where shadows are
  Her pleasant lot.

She left the rosy morn,
She left the fields of corn,
For twilight cold and lorn
  And water springs.
Through sleep, as through a veil,
She sees the sky look pale,
And hears the nightingale
  That sadly sings.

Rest, rest, a perfect rest
Shed over brow and breast;
Her face is toward the west,
  The purple land.

She cannot see the grain
Ripening on hill and plain;
She cannot feel the rain
  Upon her hand.

Rest, rest, for evermore
Upon a mossy shore;
Rest, rest at the heart's core
  Till time shall cease:
Sleep that no pain shall wake,
Night that no morn shall break,
Till joy shall overtake
  Her perfect peace.

## "I LAID BESIDE THY GATE AM LAZARUS"

I laid beside thy gate am Lazarus;
See me or see me not, I still am there,
Hungry and thirsty, sore and sick and bare,
Dog-comforted and crumb-solicitous:
While thou in all thy ways art sumptuous,
Daintily clothed, with dainties for thy fare:
Thus a world's wonder thou art quit of care,
And, be I seen or not seen, I am thus.
One day a worm for thee, a worm for me:
With my worm angel-songs and trumpet-burst
And plenitude an end of all desire:
But what for thee, alas! but what for thee?
Fire and an unextinguishable thirst,
Thirst in an unextinguishable fire.

## "IF THERE BE ANY ONE"

If there be any one can take my place
And make you happy whom I grieve to grieve,
Think not that I can grudge it, but believe
I do commend you to that nobler grace,
That readier wit than mine, that sweeter face;
Yea, since your riches make me rich, conceive
I too am crowned, while bridal crowns I weave,
And thread the bridal dance with jocund pace.

For if I did not love you, it might be
That I should grudge you some one dear delight;
But since the heart is yours that was mine own,
Your pleasure is my pleasure, right my right,
Your honorable freedom makes me free,
And you companioned I am not alone.

## WHEN I AM DEAD, MY DEAREST

When I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet:
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not see the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on as if in pain:
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

## REMEMBER ME WHEN I AM GONE AWAY

Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you planned.
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

## O EARTH, LIE HEAVILY UPON HER EYES

O Earth, lie heavily upon her eyes;
Seal her sweet eyes weary of watching, Earth;
Lie close around her; leave no room for mirth
With its harsh laughter, nor for sound of sighs.
She hath no questions, she hath no replies,
Hushed in and curtained with a blessed dearth
Of all that irked her from the hour of birth;
With stillness that is almost Paradise.
Darkness more clear than noonday holdeth her,
Silence more musical than any song;
Even her very heart has ceased to stir:
Until the morning of Eternity
Her rest shall not begin nor end, but be;
And when she wakes she will not think it long.

## "TIME FLIES, HOPE FLAGS, LIFE PLIES A WEARIED WING"

Time flies, hope flags, life plies a wearied wing;
Death following hard on life gains ground apace;
Faith runs with each and rears an eager face,
Outruns the rest, makes light of everything,
Spurns earth, and still finds breath to pray and sing;
While love ahead of all uplifts his praise,
Still asks for grace and still gives thanks for grace,
Content with all day brings and night will bring.
Life wanes; and when love folds his wings above
Tired hope, and less we feel his conscious pulse,
Let us go fall asleep, dear friend, in peace:
A little while, and age and sorrow cease;
A little while, and life reborn annuls
Loss and decay and death, and all is love.

## "TRUST ME, I HAVE NOT EARNED YOUR DEAR REBUKE"

Trust me, I have not earned your dear rebuke,—
I love, as you would have me, God the most;
Would lose not Him, but you, must one be lost
Nor with Lot's wife cast back a faithless look,

Unready to forego what I forsook;
This say I, having counted up the cost,
This, though I be the feeblest of God's host,
The sorriest sheep Christ shepherds with His crook.

Yet while I love my God the most, I deem
That I can never love you overmuch;
I love Him more, so let me love you too;
Yea, as I apprehend it, love is such
I cannot love you if I love not Him,
I cannot love Him if I love not you.

## DREAM-LOVE

Young Love lies sleeping
  In May-time of the year,
Among the lilies,
  Lapped in tender light:
White lambs come grazing,
  White doves come building there;
And round about him
  The May-bushes are white.

Soft moss the pillow
  For O, a softer cheek;
Broad leaves cast shadow
  Upon the heavy eyes:
There winds and waters
  Grow lulled and scarcely speak;
There twilight lingers
  The longest in the skies.

Young Love lies dreaming;
  But who shall tell the dream?
A perfect sunlight
  On rustling forest tips;
A perfect moonlight
  Upon a rippling stream;
Or perfect silence,
  Or song of cherished lips.

Burn odors round him
  To fill the drowsy air;
Weave silent dances
  Around him to and fro;
For O, in waking,
  The sights are not so fair,
And song and silence
  Are not like these below.

Young Love lies drowsing
  Away to poppied death;
Cool shadows deepen
  Across the sleeping face:
So fails the summer
  With warm, delicious breath;
And what hath autumn
  To give us in its place?

Draw close the curtains
  Of branched evergreen;
Change cannot touch them
  With fading fingers sere:
Here the first violets
  Perhaps will bud unseen,
And a dove, maybe,
  Return to nestle here.

## LIFE AND DEATH

Life is not sweet. One day it will be sweet
  To shut our eyes and die:
Nor feel the wild flowers blow, nor birds dart by
  With flitting butterfly,
Nor grass grow long above our heads and feet,
Nor hear the happy lark that soars sky high,
Nor sigh that spring is fleet and summer fleet,
  Nor mark the waxing wheat,
Nor know who sits in our accustomed seat.

Life is not good. One day it will be good
To die, then live again;
To sleep meanwhile: so not to feel the wane
Of shrunk leaves dropping in the wood,
Nor hear the foamy lashing of the main,
Nor mark the blackened bean-fields, nor where stood
Rich ranks of golden grain;
Only dense refuse stubble clothe the plain:
Asleep from risk, asleep from pain.

## SING-SONG

(*Selections*)

Dead in the cold, a song-singing thrush,
Dead at the foot of a snowberry bush,—
Weave him a coffin of rush,
Dig him a grave where the soft mosses grow,
Raise him a tombstone of snow.

*

Hope is like a harebell trembling from its birth,
Love is like a rose the joy of all the earth;
Faith is like a lily lifted high and white,
Love is like a lovely rose the world's delight;
Harebells and sweet lilies show a thornless growth,
But the rose with all its thorns excels them both.

*

Twist me a crown of wind-flowers;
That I may fly away
To hear the singers at their song,
And players at their play.

Put on your crown of wind-flowers:
But whither would you go?
Beyond the surging of the sea
And the storms that blow.

Alas! your crown of wind-flowers
Can never make you fly:
I twist them in a crown today,
And tonight they die.

*

Where innocent bright-eyed daisies are,
With blades of grass between,
Each daisy stands up like a star
Out of a sky of green.

*

If hope grew on a bush,
And joy grew on a tree,
What a nosegay for the plucking
There would be!

But, oh, in windy autumn,
When frail flowers wither,
What should we do for hope and joy,
Fading together?

*

The wind has such a rainy sound
Moaning through the town,
The sea has such a windy sound,—
Will the ships go down?

The apples in the orchard
Tumble from their tree—
Oh, will the ships go down, go down,
In the windy sea?

*

I planted a hand
And there came up a palm,
I planted a heart
And there came up balm.

Then I planted a wish,
And there sprang a thorn,
While heaven frowned with thunder
And earth sighed forlorn.

*

Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you:
But when the leaves hang trembling
The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?
  Neither you nor I:
But when the trees bow down their heads
  The wind is passing by.

*

The lily has a smooth stalk,
  Will never hurt your hand;
But the rose upon her briar
  Is lady of the land.

There's sweetness in an apple tree,
  And profit in the corn;
But lady of all beauty
  Is a rose upon a thorn.

When with moss and honey
  She tips her bending briar,
And half unfolds her glowing heart,
  She sets the world on fire.

*

When a mounting skylark sings
  In the sunlit summer morn,
I know that heaven is up on high,
  And on earth are fields of corn.

But when a nightingale sings
  In the moonlit summer even,
I know not if earth is merely earth,
  Only that heaven is heaven.

## ECHO

Come to me in the silence of the night;
  Come in the speaking silence of a dream;
Come with soft rounded cheeks and eyes as bright
  As sunlight on a stream;
    Come back in tears,
O memory, hope and love of finished years.

O dream how sweet, too sweet, too bitter-sweet,
  Whose wakening should have been in Paradise,
Where souls brim-full of love abide and meet;
  Where thirsting longing eyes
    Watch the slow door
That opening, letting in, lets out no more.

Yet come to me in dreams, that I may live
  My very life again though cold in death;
Come back to me in dreams, that I may give
  Pulse for pulse, breath for breath:
    Speak low, lean low,
As long ago my love, how long ago.

## TWICE

I took my heart in my hand
  (O my love, O my love),
I said: Let me fall or stand.
  Let me live or die,
But this once hear me speak
  (O my love, O my love)—
Yet a woman's words are weak;
  You should speak, not I.

You took my heart in your hand
  With a friendly smile,
With a critical eye you scanned,
  Then set it down,
And said, "It is still unripe,
  Better wait awhile;
Wait while the skylarks pipe,
  Till the corn grows brown."

As you set it down it broke—
  Broke, but I did not wince;
I smiled at the speech you spoke,
  At your judgment I heard;
But I have not often smiled
  Since then, nor questioned since,
Nor cared for cornflowers wild,
  Nor sung with the singing bird.

I take my heart in my hand,
O my God, O my God,
My broken heart in my hand:
Thou hast seen, judge Thou.
My hope was written on sand,
O my God, O my God:
Now let thy judgment stand—
Yea judge me now.

This, contemned of a man,
This, marred one heedless day,
This heart take Thou to scan
Both within and without:
Refine with fire its gold,
Purge Thou its dross away—
Yea hold it in Thy hold,
Whence none can pluck it out.

I take my heart in my hand—
I shall not die but live—
Before thy face I stand;
I, for Thou callest such:
All that I have I bring
All that I am I give,
Smile Thou and I shall sing,
But shall not question much.

## PASSING AWAY

Passing away, saith the World, passing away:
Chances, beauty and youth sapped day by day:
Thy life never continueth in one stay.
Is the eye waxen dim, is the dark hair changing to gray
That hath won neither laurel nor bay?
I shall clothe myself in Spring and bud in May:
Thou, root-stricken, shalt not rebuild thy decay
On my bosom for aye.
Then I answered: Yea.

Passing away, saith my Soul, passing away:
With its burden of fear and hope, of labor and play;

Hearken what the past doth witness and say:
Rust in thy gold, a moth is in thine array,
A canker is in thy bud, thy leaf must decay.
At midnight, at cockcrow, at morning, one certain day
Lo, the Bridegroom shall come and shall not delay:
Watch thou and pray.
Then I answered: Yea.

Passing away, saith my God, passing away:
Winter passeth after the long delay:
New grapes on the vine, new figs on the tender spray,
Turtle calleth turtle in Heaven's May.
Though I tarry wait for Me, trust Me, watch and pray.
Arise, come away, night is past, and lo it is day,
My love, My sister, My spouse, thou shalt hear Me say.
Then I answered: Yea.

## MARVEL OF MARVELS

Marvel of marvels, if I myself shall behold
With mine own eyes my King in His city of gold;
Where the least of lambs is spotless white in the fold,
Where the least and last of saints in spotless white is stoled,
Where the dimmest head beyond a moon is aureoled.
O saints, my beloved, now moldering to mold in the mold,
Shall I see you lift your heads, see your cerements unrolled,
See with these very eyes? who now in darkness and cold
Tremble for the midnight cry, the rapture, the tale untold,—
*The Bridegroom cometh, cometh, His Bride to enfold!*

Cold it is, my beloved, since your funeral bell was tolled:
Cold it is, O my King, how cold alone on the wold!

## THE WORLD

By day she woos me, soft, exceeding fair:
  But all night as the moon so changeth she;
Loathsome and foul with hideous leprosy
And subtle serpents gliding in her hair.

By day she woos me to the outer air,
  Ripe fruits, sweet flowers, and full satiety:
  But through the night, a beast she grins at me,
A very monster void of love and prayer.
By day she stands a lie: by night she stands
  In all the naked horror of the truth
With pushing horns and clawed and clutching hands.
Is this a friend indeed, that I should sell
  My soul to her, give her my life and youth,
Till my feet, cloven too, take hold on hell?

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL

In the bleak mid-winter
  Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
  Water like stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
  Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
  Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him
  Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
  When He comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
  A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty
  Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him whom cherubim
  Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
  And a manger full of hay;
Enough for Him whom angels
  Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
  Which adore.

Angels and archangels
  May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
  Throng'd the air
But only His mother
  In her maiden bliss
Worshiped her Beloved
  With a kiss.

What can I give Him,
  Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
  I would bring a lamb,
If I were a wise man
  I would do my part,—
Yet what I can I give Him,
  Give my heart.

## FROM HOUSE TO HOME

. . . . . .

I have no words to tell what way we walked,
  What unforgotten path now closed and sealed;
I have no words to tell all things we talked,
  All things that he revealed:

This only can I tell: that hour by hour
  I waxed more feastful, lifted up and glad;
I felt no thorn-prick when I plucked a flower,
  Felt not my friend was sad.

"Tomorrow," once I said to him with smiles:
  "Tonight," he answered gravely and was dumb.
But pointed out the stones that numbered miles
  And miles and miles to come.

"Not so," I said: "Tomorrow shall be sweet;
  Tonight is not so sweet as coming days."
Then first I saw that he had turned his feet,
  Had turned from me his face:

Running and flying miles and miles he went,
  But once looked back to beckon with his hand
And cry: "Come home, O love, from banishment:
  Come to the distant land."

That night destroyed me like an avalanche;
  One night turned all my summer back to snow:
Next morning not a bird upon my branch,
  Not a lamb woke below,—

No bird, no lamb, no living breathing thing;
  No squirrel scampered on my breezy lawn,
No mouse lodged by his hoard: all joys took wing
  And fled before that dawn.

Azure and sun were starved from heaven above,
  No dew had fallen, biting frost lay hoar:
O love, I knew that I should meet my love,
  Should find my love no more.

"My love no more," I muttered stunned with pain:
  I shed no tear, I wrung no passionate hand,
Till something whispered: "You shall meet again,
  Meet in a distant land."

Then with a cry like famine I arose,
  I lit my candle, searched from room to room,
Searched up and down; a war of winds that froze
  Swept through the blank of gloom.

I searched day after day, night after night;
  Scant change there came to me of night or day:
"No more," I wailed, "no more": and trimmed my light,
  And gnashed but did not pray,

Until my heart broke and my spirit broke:
  Upon the frost-bound floor I stumbled, fell,
And moaned: "It is enough: withhold the stroke.
  Farewell, O love, farewell."

Then life swooned from me. And I heard the song
  Of spheres and spirits rejoicing over me:
One cried: "Our sister, she hath suffered long."—
  One answered: "Make her see."—

One cried: "Oh, blessed she who no more pain,
  Who no more disappointment shall receive."—
One answered: "Not so: she must live again;
  Strengthen thou her to live."

So while I lay entranced a curtain seemed
  To shrivel with crackling from before my face;
Across mine eyes a waxing radiance beamed
  And showed a certain place.

I saw a vision of a woman, where
  Night and new morning strive for domination;
Incomparably pale, and almost fair,
  And sad beyond expression.

Her eyes were like some fire-enshrining gem,
  Were stately like the stars, and yet were tender;
Her figure charmed me like a windy stem
  Quivering and drooped and slender.

I stood upon the outer barren ground,
  She stood on inner ground that budded flowers;
While circling in their never-slackening round
  Danced by the mystic hours.

But every flower was lifted on a thorn,
  And every thorn shot upright from its sands
To gall her feet; hoarse laughter pealed in scorn
  With cruel clapping hands.

She bled and wept, yet did not shrink; her strength
  Was strung up until daybreak of delight:
She measured measureless sorrow toward its length,
  And breadth, and depth and height.

Then marked I how a chain sustained her form,
A chain of living links not made nor riven:
It stretched sheer up through lightning, wind, and storm,
And anchored fast in heaven.

One cried: "How long? yet founded on the Rock
She shall do battle, suffer, and attain."—
One answered: "Faith quakes in the tempest shock:
Strengthen her soul again."

I saw a cup sent down and come to her
Brimfull of loathing and of bitterness:
She drank with livid lips that seemed to stir
The depth, not make it less.

But as she drank I spied a hand distill
New wine and virgin honey; making it
First bitter-sweet, then sweet indeed, until
She tasted only sweet.

Her lips and cheeks waxed rosy-fresh and young;
Drinking she sang: "My soul shall nothing want";
And drank anew: while soft a song was sung,
A mystical slow chant.

One cried: "The wounds are faithful of a friend:
The wilderness shall blossom as a rose."
One answered: "Rend the veil, declare the end,
Strengthen her ere she goes."

Then earth and heaven were rolled up like a scroll;
Time, space, and change and death, had passed away;
Weight, number, measure, each had reached its whole;
The day had come, that day.

Multitudes—multitudes—stood up in bliss,
Made equal to the angels, glorious, fair;
With harps, palms, wedding-garments, kiss of peace
And crowned and haloed hair.

They sang a song, a new song in the height,
  Harping with harps to Him Who is Strong and True:
They drank new wine, their eyes saw with new light,
  Lo, all things were made new.

Tier beyond tier they rose and rose and rose
  So high that it was dreadful, flames with flames:
No man could number them, no tongue disclose
  Their secret sacred names.

As though one pulse stirred all, one rush of blood
  Fed all, one breath swept through them myriad-voiced,
They struck their harps, cast down their crowns, they stood
  And worshiped and rejoiced.

Each face looked one way like a moon new-lit,
  Each face looked one way towards its Sun of Love;
Drank love and bathed in love and mirrored it
  And knew no end thereof.

Glory touched glory on each blessèd head,
  Hands locked dear hands never to sunder more:
These were the new-begotten from the dead
  Whom the great birthday bore.

Heart answered heart, soul answered soul at rest,
  Double against each other, filled, sufficed:
All loving, loved of all; but loving best
  And best beloved of Christ.

I saw that one who lost her love in pain,
  Who trod on thorns, who drank the loathsome cup,
The lost in night, in day was found again;
  The fallen was lifted up.

They stood together in the blessed noon,
  They sang together through the length of days;
Each loving face bent sunwards like a moon
  New-lit with love and praise.

Therefore, O friend, I would not if I might
  Rebuild my house of lies, wherein I joyed
One time to dwell: my soul shall walk in white,
  Cast down but not destroyed.

Therefore in patience I possess my soul;
  Yea, therefore as a flint I set my face,
To pluck down, to build up again the whole—
  But in a distant place.

These thorns are sharp, yet I can tread on them;
  This cup is loathsome, yet He makes it sweet:
My face is steadfast toward Jerusalem,
  My heart remembers it.

I lift the hanging hands, the feeble knees—
  I, precious more than seven times molten gold—
Until the day when from His storehouses
  God shall bring new and old;

Beauty for ashes, oil of joy for grief,
  Garment of praise for spirit of heaviness:
Although today I fade as doth a leaf,
  I languish and grow less.

Although today He prunes my twigs with pain,
  Yet doth His blood nourish and warm my root:
Tomorrow I shall put forth buds again
  And clothe myself with fruit.

Although today I walk in tedious ways,
  Today His staff is turned into a rod,
Yet will I wait for Him the appointed days
  And stay upon my God.

## T. E. BROWN

Thomas Edward Brown was born May 5, 1830, at Douglas, in the Isle of Man, where his father was vicar at St. Matthew's Church. The family was poor and when the boy went to Christchurch, Oxford, he had to earn his way as a servitor. Here, at twenty-three, he took the coveted "Double First," but his servitor-

ship was considered a bar to his election as Senior Student, the time being "one of the most intensely miserable I was ever called to endure." The year following, however, he attained "the summit of an Oxford man's ambition" and was elected Fellow of Oriel. Shortly after he was ordained deacon but "never took kindly to the life." Instead he became a schoolmaster at his old school on the Isle of Man; at Gloucester where, though unhappy, he taught and influenced the young W. E. Henley; and at Clifton College where he spent twenty-eight years, raising the inconspicuous private institution to one of the most important schools in England.

During his career as schoolmaster Brown had been writing quietly—*ohne Hast, ohne Rast*—verse of a singularly salty character. His labors as educator dissipated much of his creative energy and when he was offered the Archdeaconry of the Isle of Man, he refused, saying, "I need absolute freedom, freedom to go to church or not to go to church, freedom to commune with local preachers and occasionally to attend Methodist chapels, freedom to smoke a pipe in a Manx public-house, freedom to absent myself from church conferences and ruridecanal potterings—in short, absolute freedom." High-spirited, running the scale from burlesque to pathos ("I was a born sobber"), equally rich in love and humor, he could find no fuller outlet than his verse.

Although he had written much and printed a little, it was not until 1873 (in his forty-third year) that his first book was published. *Betty Lee, a Fo'c's'le Yarn* was republished with several other narratives as *Fo'c's'le Yarns* (1881), which latter work went through several editions. This was followed by three other volumes, all assembled a few years after his death—which occurred October 29, 1897—in *The Collected Poems of T. E. Brown* (1900), Henley supplying an Introduction to the edition of 1901. A popular *Poems of T. E. Brown* with a valuable biographical preface by H. F. B. first appeared in 1908 and has often been reprinted.

The bulk of Brown's poetry is not large nor is all of it important. His tales are diffuse, although some (particularly "Mary Quayle") anticipate the rude strength of Masefield; his finest narratives are in the Manx dialect which, though lovingly used, is too local to win large audiences. The most interesting features of his *Fo'c's'le Yarns* are their technical irregularities and the identification of the character Tom Baynes with (Tom) Brown—"when I am alone I think and speak to myself always as Tom Baynes."

But Brown is most characteristic and most himself in his lyrics. Here in that rhythmically "heightened prose" which is presumably a discovery of the twentieth century, he transmits a talk-tinctured verse, which is free in idiom, fresh in accent. His editor H. F. B. notes the vein of "quaintness" which permeates his work, and calls

attention to a likeness with George Herbert, a comparison justified by stanzas like:

> Poor souls whose god is Mammon—
> Meanwhile, from ocean's gate,
> Keen for the foaming spate,
> The true God rushes in the salmon.

"The emotion," says A. T. Quiller-Couch, "while almost equally explosive in mirth and in tears, remains an educated emotion, disciplined by a scholar's sense of language." While this conclusion is apt enough, it is only partially true. Brown's language was not always scholarly; his best passages have a tone of voice not to be found in libraries but in the homely fields that Brown loved to frequent. The charm of his verse lies not so much in his intuitive philosophy nor even in the unspectacular audacity of his fancy but in the unexpectedness of his speech. It is this spontaneity, this personal warmth—manifest not only in the much-quoted "Vespers" without which no anthology can face a reader, but in the little known "Disguises" and "An Autumn Trinket"—that makes Brown more modern than many a self-declared "modernist." Never a major poet, he will always be a delight for those who relish the touch of difference which is the test of discovery.

## I BENDED UNTO ME

I bended unto me a bough of May,
That I might see and smell:
It bore it in a sort of way,
It bore it very well.
But when I let it backward sway,
Then it were hard to tell
With what a toss, with what a swing,
The dainty thing
Resumed its proper level,
And sent me to the devil.
I know it did—you doubt it?
I turned, and saw them whispering about it.

## VESPERS

O blackbird, what a boy you are!
How you do go it!
Blowing your bugle to that one sweet star—
How you do blow it!

And does she hear you, blackbird boy, so far?
Or is it wasted breath?
"Good Lord! she is so bright
Tonight!"
The blackbird saith.

## PER OMNIA DEUS

What moves at Cardiff, how a man
At Newport ends the day as he began,
At Weston what adventure may befall,
What Bristol dreams, or if she dream at all,
Upon the pier, with step sedate,
I meditate—
Poor souls! whose God is Mammon—
Meanwhile, from Ocean's gate,
Keen for the foaming spate,
The true God rushes in the salmon.

## DISGUISES

High stretched upon the swinging yard,
I gather in the sheet;
But it is hard
And stiff, and one cries haste.
Then He that is most dear in my regard
Of all the crew gives aidance meet;
But from His hands, and from His feet,
A glory spreads wherewith the night is starred:
Moreover of a cup most bitter-sweet
With fragrance as of nard,
And myrrh, and cassia spiced,
He proffers me to taste.
Then I to Him:—"Art Thou the Christ?"
He saith—"Thou say'st."

Like to an ox
That staggers 'neath the mortal blow,
She grinds upon the rocks;—
Then straight and low
Leaps forth the leveled line, and in our quarter locks.

The cradle's rigged; with swerving of the blast
We go,
Our Captain last—
Demands
"Who fired that shot?" Each silent stands—
Ah, sweet perplexity!
This too was He.

I have an arbor wherein came a toad
Most hideous to see—
Immediate, seizing staff or goad,
I smote it cruelly.
Then all the place with subtle radiance glowed—
I looked, and it was He!

## DORA

She knelt upon her brother's grave,
  My little girl of six years old—
He used to be so good and brave,
  The sweetest lamb of all our fold;
He used to shout, he used to sing,
Of all our tribe the little king—
And so unto the turf her ear she laid,
To hark if still in that dark place he play'd.
    No sound! no sound!
    Death's silence was profound;
    And horror crept
    Into her aching heart, and Dora wept.
    If this is as it ought to be,
    My God, I leave it unto Thee.

## JUVENTA PERENNIS

If youth be thine,
Spare not to drink its wine;
If youth be fled,
    Hold up
    The golden cup—
God's grapes are always red.

## AN AUTUMN TRINKET

Why does she burn
These colors on my soul—where'er I turn,
Splashes of flame and pyramids of fire
That fill me with insatiate desire,
Making me yearn
For that which, with its own intensity
Death-poisoned, hastens not to be?

Even so, even so
It is—the brightest and the dearest go:
The thrift of our great Mother calling back
Her forces, that the Spring may have no lack
Of customed show.
Not less to us the things that most we cherish
Fade from our eyes, and perish, perish, perish!

## MY GARDEN

A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Ferned grot—
The veriest school
Of peace; and yet the fool
Contends that God is not—
Not God! In gardens! When the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign;
'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

## THE SCHOONER

Just mark that schooner westward far at sea—
  'Tis but an hour ago
When she was lying boggish at the quay,
  And men ran to and fro,
And tugged, and stamped, and shoved, and pushed, and swore,
And ever and anon, with crapulous glee,
Grinned homage to viragoes on the shore.

So to the jetty gradual she was hauled:
  Then one the tiller took,
And chewed, and spat upon his hand, and bawled;
  And one the canvas shook
Forth like a moldy bat; and one, with nods
And smiles, lay on the bowsprit-end, and called
And cursed the Harbor-master by his gods.

And, rotten from the gunwale to the keel,
  Rat-riddled, bilge-bestank,
Slime-slobbered, horrible, I saw her reel,
  And drag her oozy flank,
And sprawl among the deft young waves, that laughed,
And leapt, and turned in many a sportive wheel,
As she thumped onward with her lumbering draught.

And now, behold! a shadow of repose
  Upon a line of gray,
She sleeps, that transverse cuts the evening rose—
  She sleeps, and dreams away,
Soft-blended in a unity of rest
All jars, and strifes obscene, and turbulent throes
'Neath the broad benediction of the West—

Sleeps; and methinks she changes as she sleeps,
  And dies, and is a spirit pure.
Lo! on her deck an angel pilot keeps
  His lonely watch secure;
And at the entrance of Heaven's dockyard waits,
Till from Night's leash the fine-breath'd morning leaps,
And that strong hand within unbars the gates.

## THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON

Walter Theodore Watts was born at St. Ives, Huntington, October 12, 1832; sixty-five years later he added his mother's name (Dunton) to his own. Planning to be a naturalist, he spent much time roaming in East Anglia, studying gypsy customs and becoming intimately acquainted with George Borrow whose *Lavengro* (1893) and *Romany Rye* (1903) he edited. He turned from natu-

ral history to law, which after some years, he practically abandoned for literature. His reviews appearing regularly in *The Athenaeum* were followed with interest and his contributions to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*—especially his fundamental article on "Poetry"—established his reputation as a critic. His friendships were notable. He was close to Tennyson, an intimate of Rossetti, and Swinburne's *fidus Achates* for almost thirty years, providing a home and caring for the erratic poet from 1879 to the latter's death in 1909.

Although Watts-Dunton had written continuously since his youth, his first book, *The Coming of Love* (1897), was not published until he was well over sixty. *Aylwin,* a romance, appeared the year following. Both volumes—one in verse, the other in prose —are Welsh in character and background, expressing a highly romantic conception of gypsy-life in the manner of Borrow. This glamour-seeking instinct led him to publish, in his seventieth year, a long defense or rather a glorification of the romantic movement, *The Renascence of Wonder* (1903). The phrase, "the renascence of wonder," Watts-Dunton explained, "merely indicates that there are two great impulses governing man, and probably not man only, but the entire world of conscious life: the impulse of acceptance—the impulse to take unchallenged and for granted all the phenomena of the outer world as they are—and the impulse to confront these phenomena with eyes of inquiry and wonder."

Watts-Dunton's was distinctly a study in deferred development. He married in 1905. His *Studies in Shakespeare,* published in 1910, when he was almost eighty, are pale besides Swinburne's, but remain something more than a set of scholarly essays. He died in London, June 6, 1914.

Although *The Coming of Love* contains more ambitious poems, the chorus which opens "Christmas at the 'Mermaid'" is Watts-Dunton's finest movement. Swinburne, with his usual enthusiasm, described the entire work as "a great lyrical epic" and Thomas Hardy, more cautious about the piece as a whole, enjoyed it sufficiently to write, "The absence of Shakespeare strikes me as being one of the finest touches of the poem: it thaws one into a 'humorous melancholy'—and we feel him, in some curious way, more than if he had been there." The subject, traditionally English, offers countless opportunities for a light opera swagger, opportunities which neither Watts-Dunton nor (a generation later) Alfred Noyes neglected. Nevertheless, the words are no less enjoyable for being anticipated nor the tune less popular for being a familiar one.

## WASSAIL CHORUS[1]

(*From "Christmas at the 'Mermaid'"*)

*Chorus*

Christmas knows a merry, merry place,
Where he goes with fondest face,
Brightest eye, brightest hair:
Tell the Mermaid where is that one place:
Where?

*Raleigh*

'Tis by Devon's glorious halls,
Whence, dear Ben, I come again:
Bright with golden roofs and walls—
El Dorado's rare domain—
Seem those halls when sunlight launches
Shafts of gold through leafless branches,
Where the winter's feathery mantle blanches
Field and farm and lane.

*Chorus*

Christmas knows a merry, merry place, *etc.*

*Drayton*

'Tis where Avon's wood-sprites weave
Through the boughs a lace of rime,
While the bells of Christmas Eve
Fling for Will the Stratford-chime
O'er the river-flags embossed
Rich with flowery runes of frost—
O'er the meads where snowy tufts are tossed—
Strains of olden time.

*Chorus*

Christmas knows a merry, merry place, *etc.*

[1] It is interesting to read these verses in connection with Alfred Noyes' treatment of the same theme in the latter's *Tales from the Mermaid Tavern.*

*Shakespeare's Friend*

'Tis, methinks, on any ground
Where our Shakespeare's feet are set,
There smiles Christmas, holly-crowned
With his blithest coronet:
Friendship's face he loveth well:
'Tis a countenance whose spell
Sheds a balm o'er every mead and dell
Where we used to fret.

*Chorus*

Christmas knows a merry, merry place, *etc.*

*Heywood*

More than all the pictures, Ben,
Winter weaves by wood or stream,
Christmas loves our London when
Rise thy clouds of wassail-steam—
Clouds like these, that, curling, take
Forms of faces gone, and wake
Many a lay from lips we loved, and make
London like a dream.

*Chorus*

Christmas knows a merry, merry place, *etc.*

*Ben Jonson*

Love's old songs shall never die,
Yet the new shall suffer proof;
Love's old drink of Yule brew I,
Wassail for new love's behoof;
Drink the drink I brew, and sing
Till the berried branches swing,
Till our song make all the Mermaid ring—
Yea, from rush to roof.

*Chorus*

Christmas loves this merry, merry place:—
Christmas saith with fondest face
Brightest eye, brightest hair:
Ben! the drink tastes rare of sack and mace:
Rare!

## LEWIS CARROLL

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson was born in the village of Daresbury, Cheshire, January 27, 1832. He entered Christchurch College at nineteen, was made Master of the House at twenty-four, became a Deacon in Holy Orders at thirty. His first books published under his own name were not only serious but mathematical: *A Syllabus of Plane Algebraical Geometry* (1860) and *The Formulae of Plane Trigonometry* (1861). As the author of such grave works Dodgson did not wish his name familiarized as an entertainer of children, so when *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was published in 1865, it appeared under the *nom-de-plume* of "Lewis Carroll."

*Alice in Wonderland* (originally entitled *Alice's Adventures Underground*) and *Through the Looking Glass* (1871) are immortal though relished far more by sophisticated maturity than by the children to whom the works are presented as "appropriate" gift-books. So with *Rhyme? and Reason?* (1883), which contains that triumph of the absurd, "The Hunting of the Snark" and the madcap *Sylvie and Bruno* (1889-1893). Here the Comic Spirit is a carefully adult one, not the inconsequential Punch-and-Judy dear to childhood. Dodgson's passions were divided between occasional preaching, the continual making of puzzles and the propounding of mathematical problems. Parallel with the "Lewis Carroll" series he preoccupied himself by writing a succession of mathematical books until his death at Guildsford, January 14, 1898. To the last he refused to be identified with his pseudonym. Though it was generally known that he wrote the "Alice" books, he continually evaded the responsibility of authorship saying, "Mr. Dodgson neither claimed nor acknowledged any connection with the books not published under his name."

"Dodgson's life," writes Eleanor Farjeon, "was in his work, and he produced indefatigably a quantity of books in which nonsensical and logical minds were so balanced that those on logic could not help being nonsensical, while his nonsense was irrepressibly logical. . . . He leaves the impression of a man who inhabited a

slightly unreal world—and oddly enough, a world not of imagination, but of ingenuity. Even in his happiest work his genius was inventive rather than creative; and in all he did and thought there is a sense of arrangement, as though most of the affairs of life could be conducted delightfully through a series of games and tricks. The figure he cuts in Victorian annals is something that of a whimsical monk of the Middle Ages."

But while this résumé may be true of the man and his style, it is far from true of his characters. Alice has become a national heroine; The Mad Hatter is a recognizable neighbor; the Duchess, the Walrus and the Carpenter, even the Jabberwocky have lives—and evidently deathless ones—vividly their own. Even the absurdly logical words—"chortle" and "burble" for example—have ceased to be nonsense and have become part of our vocabulary.

## JABBERWOCKY

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
  Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
  And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
  The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
  The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand;
  Long time the manxome foe he sought—
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
  And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
  The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
  And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
  The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
  He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

## THE WALRUS AND THE CARPENTER

The sun was shining on the sea,
Shining with all his might:
He did his very best to make
The billows smooth and bright—
And this was odd, because it was
The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,
Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
After the day was done—
"It's very rude of him," she said,
"To come and spoil the fun!"

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud because
No cloud was in the sky:
No birds were flying overhead—
There were no birds to fly.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand:
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand:
"If this were only cleared away,"
They said, "it *would* be grand!"

"If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose," the Walrus said,
"That they could get it clear?"
"I doubt it," said the Carpenter,
And shed a bitter tear.

"O Oysters, come and walk with us!"
The Walrus did beseech.
"A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,
Along the briny beach:
We cannot do with more than four,
To give a hand to each."

The eldest Oyster looked at him,
But never a word he said;
The eldest Oyster winked his eye,
And shook his heavy head—
Meaning to say he did not choose
To leave the oyster-bed.

But four young Oysters hurried up,
All eager for the treat:
Their coats were brushed, their faces washed,
Their shoes were clean and neat.
And this was odd, because, you know,
They hadn't any feet.

Four other Oysters followed them,
And yet another four;
And thick and fast they came at last,
And more and more and more—
All hopping through the frothy waves,
And scrambling to the shore.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Walked on a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock
Conveniently low:
And all the little Oysters stood
And waited in a row.

"The time has come," the Walrus said,
"To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax—
Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings."

"But wait a bit," the Oysters cried,
"Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath,
And all of us are fat!"
"No hurry!" said the Carpenter.
They thanked him much for that.

"A loaf of bread," the Walrus said,
"Is what we chiefly need:
Pepper and vinegar besides
Are very good indeed—
Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed."

"But not on us!" the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue.
"After such kindness, that would be
A dismal thing to do!"
"The night is fine," the Walrus said,
"Do you admire the view?

"It was so kind of you to come!
And you are very nice!"
The Carpenter said nothing but
"Cut us another slice.
I wish you were not quite so deaf—
I've had to ask you twice!"

"It seems a shame," the Walrus said,
"To play them such a trick.
After we've brought them out so far,
And made them trot so quick!"
The Carpenter said nothing but
"The butter's spread too thick!"

"I weep for you," the Walrus said:
"I deeply sympathize."
With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket-handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.

"O Oysters," said the Carpenter,
"You've had a pleasant run!
Shall we be trotting home again?"
But answer came there none—
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd eaten every one.

## THE CROCODILE

How doth the little crocodile
Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile
On every golden scale!

How cheerfully he seems to grin,
How neatly spreads his claws,
And welcomes little fishes in,
With gently smiling jaws!

## FATHER WILLIAM

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head—
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,
"I feared it might injure the brain;
But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned before,
And have grown most uncommonly fat;
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door—
Pray, what is the reason of that?"

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his gray locks,
"I kept all my limbs very supple
By the use of this ointment—one shilling the box—
Allow me to sell you a couple?"

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak
For anything tougher than suet;
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak—
Pray, how did you manage to do it?"

"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw
Has lasted the rest of my life."

"You are old," said the youth, "one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose—
What made you so awfully clever?"

"I have answered three questions, and that is enough,"
Said his father. "Don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you down-stairs!"

## METAMORPHOSES

(*From "Sylvie and Bruno"*)

He thought he saw an Elephant,
That practiced on a fife:
He looked again and found it was
A letter from his wife.
"At length I realize," he said,
"The bitterness of life!"

He thought he saw a Buffalo
Upon the chimney-piece:
He looked again, and found it was
His Sister's Husband's Niece.
"Unless you leave this house," he said,
"I'll send for the Police!"

He thought he saw a Rattlesnake
That questioned him in Greek:
He looked again, and found it was
The Middle of Next Week.
"The one thing I regret," he said,
"Is that it cannot speak!"

He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk
Descending from the 'Bus:
He looked again, and found it was
A Hippopotamus.
"If this should stay to dine," he said,
"There won't be much for us!"

He thought he saw a Coach-and-Four
That stood beside his bed:
He looked again, and found it was
A Bear without a Head.
"Poor thing," he said, "poor silly thing!
It's waiting to be fed!"

He thought he saw an Albatross
That fluttered round the lamp:
He looked again and found it was
A Penny-Postage-Stamp.
"You'd best be getting home," he said:
"The nights are very damp!"

He thought he saw a Garden Door
That opened with a key:
He looked again, and found it was
A Double-Rule-of-Three:
"And all its mystery," he said,
"Is clear as day to me!"

## THE BAKER'S TALE

(*From "The Hunting of the Snark"*)

They roused him with muffins—they roused him with ice—
  They roused him with mustard and cress—
They roused him with jam and judicious advice—
  They set him conundrums to guess.

When at length he sat up and was able to speak,
  His sad story he offered to tell;
And the Bellman cried, "Silence! Not even a shriek!"
  And excitedly tingled his bell.

There was silence supreme! Not a shriek, not a scream,
  Scarcely even a howl or a groan,
As the man they called "Ho!" told his story of woe
  In an antediluvian tone.

"My father and mother were honest, though poor—"
  "Skip all that!" cried the Bellman in haste.
"If it once becomes dark, there's no chance of a Snark—
  We have hardly a minute to waste!"

"I skip forty years," said the Baker, in tears,
  "And proceed without further remark
To the day when you took me aboard of your ship
  To help you in hunting the Snark.

"A dear uncle of mine (after whom I was named)
  Remarked when I bade him farewell—"
"Oh, skip your dear uncle!" the Bellman exclaimed,
  As he angrily tingled his bell.

"He remarked to me then," said the mildest of men,
  "If your Snark be a Snark, that is right:
"Fetch it home by all means—you may serve it with greens
  And it's handy for striking a light.

"You may seek it with thimbles, and seek it with care;
  You may hunt it with forks and hope;
You may threaten its life with a railway-share;
  You may charm it with smiles and soap—"

("That's exactly the method," the Bellman bold
In a hasty parenthesis cried,
"That's exactly the way I have always been told
That the capture of Snarks should be tried!")

"But oh, beamish nephew, beware of the day,
If your Snark be a Boojum! For then
You will softly and suddenly vanish away
And never be met with again!

"It is this, it is this that oppresses my soul,
When I think of my uncle's last words:
And my heart is like nothing so much as a bowl
Brimming over with quivering curds!

"It is this, it is this—" "We have had that before!"
The Bellman indignantly said.
And the Baker replied, "Let me say it once more.
It is this, it is this that I dread!

"I engage with the Snark—every night after dark—
In a dreamy delirious fight;
I serve it with greens in those shadowy scenes,
And I use it for striking a light:

"But if ever I meet with a Boojum, that day,
In a moment (of this I am sure),
I shall softly and suddenly vanish away—
And the notion I cannot endure!"

## WILLIAM MORRIS

William Morris, poet and artisan, was born at Walthamstow, March 24, 1834. The mercantile strain inherited from his grandfather, a prosperous tradesman in Worcester, stood him in good stead when he turned craftsman and set up his own shop. In youth, however, he was concerned only with literature; a precocious reader, it is said that he had read most of the Waverley novels at the age of four. Through such romances he steeped himself in a literary *moyen âge* which was to dominate him in maturity. A significant diversion of his childhood was his riding about Epping

Forest at the age of six—when the chimney-factories were invading the countryside—in a toy suit of armor. He was educated in neighboring schools, matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford, in 1852 and, while at college, formed a friendship with Edward Burne-Jones that was to last all his life. Their mutual passions were medieval literature, ecclesiastical art, and theological history. For a while they considered taking holy orders, but, with a large if vague social reform in mind, Morris turned to architecture and Burne-Jones to painting.

Four years later Morris, not content with work in an architect's office, founded *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine,* which, though it died within a year, brought him into close contact with Dante Gabriel Rossetti who convinced him that painting was the only occupation for a man of his talents. So, forsaking letters and blue prints for the nonce, Morris planted himself in front of canvases and on scaffoldings intent on realizing his dream of an up-to-date medievalism. But the poet was not to be so lightly extinguished. In 1858 he published *The Defense of Guenevere,* a long poem as different from Malory's treatment of the theme as it was from Tennyson's. It attracted little attention, and four years later, after furnishing his own home entirely with his own hands, Morris formed a company to supply not only interior decorations but household utensils of every kind, embodying guild principles and "guild conscience." Such was Morris's first enterprise directed against factory products and the quick-growing, mechanical ugliness of his day. This opposition to a machine-mad age expressed itself directly in his hand-made products and his social protests, indirectly in his poetry which turned back to what—to Morris at least—were larger issues and more spacious times. *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867), *The Earthly Paradise* (1868-1870), *Love is Enough* (1872) announce and elaborate a theme of epic grandeur, the triumph of the imagination over stubborn material.

Having found his métier, Morris's energies, never long repressed, found new and varied outlets. Incited by a trip to Iceland, he began work on the Icelandic sagas—*Sigurd the Volsung* appeared in 1876. He finished a characteristic if inexact translation of the *Aeneid.* Becoming more concerned with economic determinism, he wrote the idealistic *News from Nowhere* (1891), *A Dream of John Ball* and the still-popular *Chants for Socialists.* When his pronouncements were considered not sufficiently "advanced," he drifted away from the movement and back to more subtle ways of educating the public.

Before 1890 Morris had established his reputation as a designer and manufacturer of tapestries in the old spirit, as an illuminator of manuscripts, and as the best of contemporary typographers.

The Kelmscott Press was his creation and the darling of his later years, his last labor, which took five years to perfect, being the almost priceless Kelmscott Chaucer. He refused the laureateship offered him after the death of Tennyson, pleading that he was "too remote from the requirements of a court," but really fearing that his taste and the public's were too wide apart. He died October 3, 1896.

The importance of Morris has dwindled perceptibly; his influence remains. It is indisputable that his medievalism was a sentimental one, that as "the idle singer of an empty day" he enjoyed championing a lost cause. It is also true that his verse is muffled with too much tapestry and confused with the clash of too many arms. But one must remember the decorous dullness from which Morris reacted. He brought color into a gray and prosy world, reviving a feeling for handicraft which extends to our own time. Most of all he put vigor and a sharpened if spasmodic urgency into the thinning blood of English esthetism. His poetry lacks final authority because Morris himself could not adjust to any prolonged reality; it can never appeal profoundly to a large portion of mankind, since, for all his propaganda, Morris was more interested in the things he handled than the men he wanted to uplift. He loved humanity in the abstract; the individual—his poetry betrays it—was strange and somewhat repellent. Life to him was something to be found in a tapestry-hung library furnished with exquisitely printed books, or riding through a blossom-shedding wood, following the gleam in a suit of toy armor. But underneath the outworn trappings the soul was knightly and real.

### LOVE IS ENOUGH

Love is enough: though the World be a-waning,
And the woods have no voice but the voice of complaining,
  Though the skies be too dark for dim eyes to discover
The gold-cups and daisies fair blooming thereunder,
Though the hills be held shadows, and the sea a dark wonder,
  And this day draw a veil over all deeds pass'd over,
Yet their hands shall not tremble, their feet shall not falter:
The void shall not weary, the fear shall not alter
  These lips and these eyes of the loved and the lover.

### THE GILLIFLOWER OF GOLD

A golden gilliflower today
I wore upon my helm alway

And won the prize of this tourney
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

However well Sir Giles might sit,
His sun was weak to wither it,
Lord Miles's blood was dew on it:
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Although my spear in splinters flew,
From John's steel-coat my eye was true;
I wheel'd about and cried for you,
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Yea, do not doubt my heart was good,
Though my sword flew like rotten wood,
To shout, although I scarcely stood,
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

My hand was steady too, to take
My ax from round my neck, and break
John's steel-coat up for my love's sake.
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

When I stood in my tent again
Arming afresh I felt a pain
Take hold of me, I was so fain—
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

To hear: "*Honneur aux fils des preux!*"
Right in my ears again, and shew
The gilliflower blossom'd anew.
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

The Sieur Guillaume against me came,
His tabard bore three points of flame
From a red heart: with little blame—
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Our tough spears crackled up like straw;
He was the first to turn and draw
His sword that had nor speck nor flaw,—
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

But I felt weaker than a maid,
And my brain, dizzied and afraid,
Within my helm a fierce tune play'd,—
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Until I thought of your dear head,
Bow'd to the gilliflower bed,
The yellow flowers stain'd with red;—
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Crash! how the swords met, "*giroflée!*"
The fierce tune in my helm would play,
"*La belle! la belle! jaune giroflée!*"
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Once more the great swords met again,
"*La belle! la belle!* but who fell then?
Le Sieur Guillaume, who struck down ten;—
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

And as with mazed and unarm'd face
Toward my own crown and the Queen's place,
They led me at a gentle pace—
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

I almost saw your quiet head
Bow'd o'er the gilliflower bed,
The yellow flowers stain'd with red—
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

## SHAMEFUL DEATH

There were four of us about that bed;
The mass-priest knelt at the side,
I and his mother stood at the head,
Over his feet lay the bride;
We were quite sure that he was dead,
Though his eyes were open wide.

He did not die in the night,
  He did not die in the day,
But in the morning twilight
  His spirit pass'd away,
When neither sun nor moon was bright,
  And the trees were merely gray.

He was not slain with the sword,
  Knight's ax, or the knightly spear,
Yet spoke he never a word
  After he came in here;
I cut away the cord
  From the neck of my brother dear.

He did not strike one blow,
  For the recreants came behind,
In a place where the hornbeams grow,
  A path right hard to find,
For the hornbeam boughs swing so
  That the twilight makes it blind.

They lighted a great torch then,
  When his arms were pinioned fast
Sir John the knight of the Fen,
  Sir Guy of the Dolorous Blast,
With knights threescore and ten,
  Hung brave Lord Hugh at last.

I am threescore and ten,
  And my hair is all turn'd gray,
But I met Sir John of the Fen
  Long ago on a summer day,
And am glad to think of the moment when
  I took his life away.

I am threescore and ten
  And my strength is mostly pass'd,
But long ago I and my men
  When the sky was overcast,
And the smoke roll'd over the reeds of the fen,
  Slew Guy of the Dolorous Blast.

And now, all knights of you,
I pray you pray for Sir Hugh,
A good knight and a true,
And for Alice, his wife, pray too.

## THE HAYSTACK IN THE FLOODS

Had she come all the way for this,
To part at last without a kiss?
Yea had she borne the dirt and rain
That her own eyes might see him slain
Beside the haystack in the floods?

Along the dripping leafless woods,
The stirrup touching either shoe,
She rode astride as troopers do;
With kirtle kilted to her knee,
To which the mud splash'd wretchedly;
And the wet dripped from every tree
Upon her head and heavy hair,
And on her eyelids broad and fair;
The tears and rain ran down her face.
By fits and starts they rode apace,
And very often was his place
Far off from her; he had to ride
Ahead to see what might betide
When the roads cross'd; and sometimes when
There rose a murmuring from his men,
Had to turn back with promises;
Ah me! she had but little ease;
And often for pure doubt and dread
She sobb'd, made giddy in the head
By the swift riding; while, for cold,
Her slender fingers scarce could hold
The wet reins; yea and scarcely, too,
She felt the foot within her shoe
Against the stirrup: all for this
To part at last without a kiss
Beside the haystack in the floods.

For when they near'd that old soak'd hay,
They saw across the only way
That Judas, Godmar, and the three
Red running lions dismally
Grinn'd from his pennon, under which,
In one straight line along the ditch,
They counted thirty heads.
So then,
While Robert turn'd round to his men,
She saw at once the wretched end,
And, stooping down, tried hard to rend
Her coif the wrong way from her head,
And hid her eyes; while Robert said:
"Nay, love, 'tis scarcely two to one,
At Poictiers where we made them run
So fast—why, sweet my love, good cheer.
Nought after this."
But, "O," she said,
"My God! my God! I have to tread
The long way back without you; then
The court at Paris; those six men;
The gratings of the Chatelet;
The swift Seine on some rainy day
Like this, and people standing by,
And laughing, while my weak hands try
To recollect how strong men swim.
All this, or else a life with him,
For which I should be damned at last,
Would God that this next hour were past!"

He answer'd not but cried his cry,
"St. George for Marny!" cheerily;
And laid his hand upon her rein.
Alas! no man of all his train
Gave back that cheery cry again;
And, while for rage his thumb beat fast
Upon his sword-hilts, some one cast
About his neck a kerchief long,
And bound him.

Then they went along
To Godmar; who said: "Now, Jehane,
Your lover's life is on the wane
So fast, that, if this very hour
You yield not as my paramour,
He will not see the rain leave off—
Nay, keep thy tongue from gibe and scoff,
Sir Robert, or I slay you now."

She laid her hand upon her brow,
Then gazed upon her palm, as though
She thought her forehead bled, and—"No."
She said, and turn'd her head away,
As there were nothing else to say,
And everything were settled: red
Grew Godmar's face from chin to head:
"Jehane, on yonder hill there stands
My castle, guarding well my lands:
What hinders me from taking you,
And doing what I list to do
To your fair willful body, while
Your knight lies dead?"
A wicked smile
Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,
A long way out she thrust her chin:
"You know that I would strangle you
While you were sleeping; or bite through
Your throat, by God's help—ah!" she said,
"Lord Jesus, pity your poor maid!
For in such wise they hem me in,
I cannot choose but sin and sin,
Whatever happens: yet I think
They could not make me eat or drink,
And so should I just reach my rest."
"Nay if you do not my behest,
O Jehane! though I love you well,"
Said Godmar, "would I fail to tell
All that I know." "Foul lies," she said.
"Eh? lies my Jehane? by God's head,
At Paris folks would deem them true!
Do you know, Jehane, they cry for you,

'Jehane, the brown! Jehane the brown!
Give us Jehane to burn or drown!'—
Eh—gag me, Robert!—sweet my friend,
This were indeed a piteous end
For those long fingers and long feet,
And long neck and smooth shoulders sweet;
An end that few men would forget
That saw it—So, an hour yet:
Consider, Jehane, which to take
Of life or death!"

So, scarce awake,
Dismounting, did she leave that place,
And totter some yards: with her face
Turn'd upward to the sky she lay,
Her head on a wet heap of hay,
And fell asleep: and while she slept,
And did not dream, the minutes crept
Round to the twelve again; but she
Being waked at last, sigh'd quietly,
And strangely childlike came, and said:
"I will not." Straightway Godmar's head,
As though it hung on strong wires turn'd
Most sharply round and his face burn'd.
For Robert—both his eyes were dry,
He could not weep, but gloomily
He seemed to watch the rain; yea too,
His lips were firm; he tried once more
To touch her lips; she reach'd out, sore
And vain desire so tortured them,
The poor gray lips, and now the hem
Of his sleeve brush'd them.

With a start
Up Godmar rose, thrust them apart;
From Robert's throat he loosed the bands
Of silk and nail; with empty hands
Held out, she stood and gazed, and saw,
The long bright blade without a flaw
Glide out from Godmar's sheath, his hand
In Robert's hair; she saw him bend
Back Robert's head; she saw him send

The thin steel down; the blow told well,
Right backward the knight Robert fell,
And moan'd as dogs do, being half dead,
Unwitting, as I deem: so then
Godmar turned grinning to his men,
Who ran some five or six, and beat
His head to pieces at their feet.

Then Godmar turn'd again and said:
"So Jehane, the first fitte is read!
Take note, my lady, that your way
Lies backward to the Chatelet!"
She shook her head and gazed awhile
At her cold hands with a rueful smile,
As though this thing had made her mad.

This was the parting that they had
Beside the haystack in the floods.

## JAMES THOMSON

James Thomson, who signed his work "B. V." to distinguish himself from the eighteenth century author of "The Seasons," was born at Port-Glasgow, in Renfrewshire, November 23, 1834. His life was unhappy from the beginning. His boyhood was spent in Orphan and Military asylums; his youth was passed as an Army schoolmaster among surroundings oppressive to his solitary nature. The sun broke through for a short period while he was stationed at a garrison near Cork, when he fell violently in love and was loved by the sergeant's daughter. Her death two years later plunged Thomson into a profound gloom from which he never emerged. It is significant that his first work (in 1858) was published under the pseudonym "Crepusculus." He was associated with and assisted by Charles Bradlaugh, but nobody and nothing could save him from himself. In 1862 he was dismissed from the Army. From 1866 to the time of his death—except for two brief intervals—he lived in a single room in the purlieus of London, suffering from insomnia and intemperance, increasing pessimism and dipsomania interacting upon each other. In 1872 he went to America as agent for a silver mine and discovered it to be fraudulent; in 1873 he went to Spain as war-correspondent for *The New York*

*World* and was prostrated by sun-stroke. Meanwhile he had produced several books, the most famous of which was that somber masterpiece, *The City of Dreadful Night*, which was published in 1880. *Vane's Story and Other Poems*, published in the same year and *Essays and Phantasies* (1881) did little to enhance his reputation. He sank back into the morbidity from which he had scarcely risen, died June 3, 1882, and was buried in unconsecrated ground.

Writing of Thomson, John Davidson (probably with self-identification) exceeded the excessive tributes of George Meredith and George Eliot, saying: "I think he was by nature endowed beyond any English poet of his time. There are no half measures with Nature. . . . Nature is the great spendthrift. She will burn up the world some day to attain what will probably seem to us a very inadequate end; and in order to have things stated at their worst, once for all, in English, she took a splendid genius and made him—an Army schoolmaster, starved his intellect, starved his heart, starved his body." Davidson's tribute is uncritically generous, but though Thomson's main work, *The City of Dreadful Night* suffers from unrelieved darkness and a very concentration of pessimism, no one can question its sincerity or imaginative strength. He wrote as one who had never experienced a noon, whose only season was a protracted and relentless winter, whose only hour was midnight, whose only food was want. Considering the facts of his life and their effects upon his temperament, it can be seen that this was no mere attitude, and the resulting poetry sounded a depth, a very abyss of self-confession. In this abyss where no light penetrated, he attempted to paint black on black, and almost succeeded in conveying a sense of cosmic hopelessness. In his vision monotony was stretched to infinite despair.

> If we could near them with the flight unflown,
> We should but find them worlds as sad as this,
> Or suns all self-consuming like our own
> Enringed by planet worlds as much amiss:
> They wax and wane through fusion and confusion;
> The spheres eternal are a grand illusion,
> The empyréan is a void abyss.

This is the keynote and cadence of his philosophy, which, though bitter, never becomes perverse. For him, the city is a projection of that Nothingness in which night and death held supreme court. Sun never visits this city and dawn glooms "in her tenebrous regard" because:

The sense that every struggle brings defeat
Because Fate holds no prize to crown success;
That all the oracles are dumb or cheat
Because they have no secret to express;
That none can pierce the vast black veil uncertain
Because there is no light beyond the curtain;
That all is vanity and nothingness.

A few of Thomson's smaller verses have found their way into a few anthologies, but his lyrics are occasional and uncharacteristic. His sonorities require amplitude and reverberate in a kind of haunted space. One hears them best in passages like the denunciation of the city and the lamentation beginning:

As I came through the desert thus it was.

His heavily weighted stresses communicate nightmare depression, nowhere more effectively than in the description of the "Melancholia" which epitomized Thomson far more than Dürer.

## "AS I CAME THROUGH THE DESERT"

(*From "The City of Dreadful Night"*)

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: All was black,
In heaven no single star, on earth no track;
A brooding hush without a stir or note,
The air so thick it clotted in my throat;
And thus for hours; then some enormous things
Swooped past with savage cries and clanking wings:
But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert, thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Eyes of fire
Glared at me throbbing with a starved desire;
The hoarse and heavy and carnivorous breath
Was hot upon me from deep jaws of death;
Sharp claws, swift talons, fleshless fingers cold
Plucked at me from the bushes, tried to hold:
But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Lo you, there,
That hillock burning with a brazen glare;
Those myriad dusky flames with points a-glow
Which writhed and hissed and darted to and fro;
A Sabbath of the Serpents, heaped pell-mell
For Devil's roll-call and some fête of Hell:
Yet I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Meteors ran
And crossed their javelins on the black sky-span;
The zenith opened to a gulf of flame,
The dreadful thunderbolts jarred earth's fixed frame:
The ground all heaved in waves of fire that surged
And weltered round me sole there unsubmerged:
Yet I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Air once more,
And I was close upon a wild sea-shore;
Enormous cliffs arose on either hand,
The deep tide thundered up a league-broad strand;
White foam-belts seethed there, wan spray swept and flew;
The sky broke, moon and stars and clouds and blue:
And I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: On the left
The sun arose and crowned a broad crag-cleft;
There stopped and burned out black, except a rim,
A bleeding eyeless socket, red and dim;
Whereon the moon fell suddenly south-west,
And stood above the right-hand cliffs at rest:
Still I stood on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: From the right
A shape came slowly with a ruddy light;
A woman with a red lamp in her hand,
Bareheaded and barefooted on that strand;
O desolation moving with such grace!
O anguish with such beauty in thy face.
I fell as on my bier,
Hope travailed with such fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: I was twain,
Two selves distinct that cannot join again;
One stood apart and knew but could not stir,
And watched the other stark in swoon and her;
And she came on, and never turned aside,
Between such sun and moon and roaring tide:
And as she came more near
My soul grew mad with fear.

. . . . . .

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: When the tide
Swept up to her there kneeling by my side,
She clasped that corpse-like me, and they were borne
Away, and this vile me was left forlorn;
I know the whole sea cannot quench that heart,
Or cleanse that brow, or wash those two apart:
They love; their doom is drear,
Yet they nor hope nor fear;
But I, what do I here?

## MELANCHOLIA

(*From "The City of Dreadful Night"*)

Anear the center of that northern crest
Stands out a level upland bleak and bare,
From which the city east and south and west
Sinks gentle in long waves; and thronèd there
An Image sits, stupendous, superhuman,
The bronze colossus of a wingèd woman,
Upon a graded granite base foursquare.

Low-seated she leans forward massively,
With cheek on clenched left hand, the forearm's might
Erect, its elbow on her rounded knee;
Across a clasped book in her lap the right
Upholds a pair of compasses; she gazes
With full set eyes but wandering in thick mazes
Of somber thought beholds no outward sight.

Words cannot picture her; but all men know
That solemn sketch the pure sad artist wrought
Three centuries and threescore years ago,
With phantasies of his peculiar thought:
The instruments of carpentry and science
Scattered about her feet, in strange alliance
With the keen wolf-hound sleeping undistraught;

Scales, hour-glass, bell, and magic-square above;
The grave and solid infant perched beside,
With open winglets that might bear a dove,
Intent upon its tablets, heavy-eyed;
Her folded wings as of a mighty-eagle,
But all too impotent to lift the regal
Robustness of her earth-born strength and pride;

And with those wings, and that light wreath which seems
To mock her grand head and the knotted frown
Of forehead charged with baleful thoughts and dreams,
The household bunch of keys, the housewife's gown
Voluminous, indented, and yet rigid
As if a shell of burnished metal frigid,
The feet thick shod to tread all weakness down;

The comet hanging o'er the waste dark seas,
The massy rainbow curved in front of it,
Beyond the village with the masts and trees;
The snaky-imp, dog-headed, from the Pit,
Bearing upon its batlike leathern pinions
Her name unfolded in the sun's dominions,
The "Melancholia" that transcends all wit.

Thus has the artist copied her, and thus
  Surrounded to expound her form sublime,
Her fate heroic and calamitous;
  Fronting the dreadful mysteries of Time,
Unvanquished in defeat and desolation,
Undaunted in the hopeless conflagration
  Of the day setting on her baffled prime.

### THE VINE

The wine of Love is music,
  And the feast of Love is song:
When Love sits down to banquet,
  Love sits long:

Sits long and rises drunken,
  But not with the feast and the wine;
He reeleth with his own heart,
  That great, rich Vine.

## W. S. GILBERT

William Schwenk Gilbert was born in London, November 18, 1836. He was educated at Boulogne and at King's College, receiving his B.A. from the University of London in 1856. He entered the Civil Service in 1857, left it in 1861, was called to the bar in 1864, became a magistrate in 1891.

Thus his official career. But Gilbert's was too exuberant a nature to be satisfied with civic duties alone. His avocation, and later his profession, was art and letters, a penchant manifested early in youth when he illustrated his father's novels with that whimsical line which was to be his hallmark. In 1861 he began contributing verses to *Fun*, a short-lived rival of *Punch*, which had refused his contributions, returning the famous "Yarn of the Nancy Bell" on the ground that it was "too cannibalistic for its readers' tastes." These rhymes, ranging from the deftly ironic to the wildly absurd, were published under the title *The Bab Ballads* (1869) and were followed a few years later by *More Bab Ballads*, both volumes being characteristically illustrated by Gilbert himself.

Gilbert turned to the stage in 1866, writing burlesque, pantomimes, melodramas and sentimental pieces full of hearts and flowers for many years. It was not until *Trial by Jury* (1875) that

he found his collaborator and, at the same time, his métier. In Arthur Sullivan, Gilbert met the ideal partner. Sullivan's music combined the mock-gravity and the serious humor which we know as "Gilbertian," and which in turn and rhythm was characteristically English. The alliance was phenomenal, artistically and financially. Success followed success: *The Sorcerer* (1877), *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1878), *The Pirates of Penzance* (1880), *Patience or Bunthorne's Bride* (1881), *Iolanthe* (1882), *Princess Ida,* "a respectful perversion of Mr. Tennyson's exquisite poem" (1884), *The Mikado* (1885), *Ruddigore* (1887), *The Yeomen of the Guard* (1888), *The Gondoliers* (1889).

Most of these were brilliant extensions of various Bab Ballads, aimed at the outstanding foibles of his time. Masquerading as nonsense, his librettos were never without purpose; his pattering syllables, jingling to heel-and-toe measures, carried literary as well as social criticism. In the staid shadow of the Victorian court, Gilbert bore the office if not the habiliments of the Court Fool, satirizing the complacent insularity of that era. *Pinafore* is a lightly sardonic commentary on parochial office-holders and the British Navy; *Iolanthe* mocks the Peerage in general and the House of Lords in particular; *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Ruddigore* are even slyer in their ridicule of "blue blood." But none offers so much literary refreshment as *Patience,* founded on the Bab Ballad called "The Rival Curates." Here Gilbert, changing his clergymen to a couple of yearning esthetes, delightfully victimized a movement and an outstanding personality. Although Gilbert never specifically acknowledged it, there is little doubt that the figure of Bunthorne "uttering platitudes in stained-glass attitudes" was suggested by if not actually derived from Oscar Wilde. The "esthetic craze" died at the beginning of the century, but Gilbert's unvenomed irony is so universal that it persists beyond the movement that incited it, and applies to similar exaggerations in any time.

Most of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas were produced at The Savoy, a theater especially built for them, and so, when Gilbert selected the best lyrics from his librettos, he published them under the title, *Songs of a Savoyard* (1890). In these, even more than in the Bab Ballads, he showed himself a master of not only wit and intricate rhyme, but of meter, fitting his sly parables to gay paradoxes in new and extraordinary supple rhythms. Scores of emulators have attempted his manner but none has captured his dexterity.

In 1908 Gilbert was knighted. He died at Harrow Weald, May, 1911.

## GENTLE ALICE BROWN

It was a robber's daughter, and her name was Alice Brown,
Her father was the terror of a small Italian town;
Her mother was a foolish, weak, but amiable old thing;
But it isn't of her parents that I'm going for to sing.

As Alice was a-sitting at her window-sill one day,
A beautiful young gentleman he chanced to pass that way;
She cast her eyes upon him, and he looked so good and true,
That she thought, "I could be happy with a gentleman like you!"

And every morning passed her house that cream of gentlemen,
She knew she might expect him at a quarter unto ten;
A sorter in the Custom-house, it was his daily road
(The Custom-house was fifteen minutes' walk from her abode).

But Alice was a pious girl, who knew it wasn't wise
To look at strange young sorters with expressive purple eyes;
So she sought the village priest to whom her family confessed,
The priest by whom their little sins were carefully assessed.

"Oh, holy father," Alice said, "'twould grieve you, would it not,
To discover that I was a most disreputable lot?
Of all unhappy sinners, I'm the most unhappy one!"
The padre said, "Whatever have you been and gone and done?"

"I have helped mamma to steal a little kiddy from its dad,
I've assisted dear papa in cutting up a little lad,
I've planned a little burglary and forged a little check,
And slain a little baby for the coral on its neck!"

The worthy pastor heaved a sigh, and dropped a silent tear,
And said, "You mustn't judge yourself too heavily, my dear:
It's wrong to murder babies, little corals for to fleece;
But sins like these one expiates at half-a-crown apiece.

"Girls will be girls—you're very young, and flighty in your mind;
Old heads upon young shoulders we must not expect to find:
We mustn't be too hard upon these little girlish tricks.
Let's see—five crimes at half-a-crown—exactly twelve-and-six."

"Oh, father," little Alice cried, "your kindness makes me weep,
You do these little things for me so singularly cheap—
Your thoughtful liberality I never can forget;
But, oh! there is another crime I haven't mentioned yet!

"A pleasant-looking gentleman, with pretty purple eyes,
I've noticed at my window, as I've sat a-catching flies;
He passes by it every day as certain as can be—
I blush to say I've winked at him, and he has winked at me!"

"For shame!" said Father Paul, "my erring daughter! On my word
This is the most distressing news that I have ever heard.
Why, naughty girl, your excellent papa has pledged your hand
To a promising young robber, the lieutenant of his band!

"This dreadful piece of news will pain your worthy parents so!
They are the most remunerative customers I know;
For many many years they've kept starvation from my doors:
I never knew so criminal a family as yours!

"The common country folk in this insipid neighborhood
Have nothing to confess, they're so ridiculously good;
And if you marry any one respectable at all,
Why, you'll reform, and what then will become of Father Paul?"

The worthy priest, he up and drew his cowl upon his crown,
And started off in haste to tell the news to Robber Brown—
To tell him how his daughter, who was now for marriage fit,
Had winked upon a sorter, who reciprocated it.

Good Robber Brown he muffled up his anger pretty well:
He said, "I have a notion, and that notion I will tell;
I will nab this gay young sorter, terrify him into fits,
And get my gentle wife to chop him into little bits.

"I've studied human nature, and I know a thing or two;
Though a girl may fondly love a living gent, as many do,
A feeling of disgust upon her senses there will fall
When she looks upon his body chopped particularly small."

He traced that gallant sorter to a still suburban square;
He watched his opportunity, and seized him unaware;
He took a life-preserver and he hit him on the head,
And Mrs. Brown dissected him before she went to bed.

And pretty little Alice grew more settled in her mind,
She never more was guilty of a weakness of the kind,
Until at length good Robber Brown bestowed her pretty hand
On the promising young robber, the lieutenant of his band.

## RECITATION AND SONG

(*From "Patience"*)

*Bunthorne:*

Am I alone,
And unobserved? I am!
Then let me own
I'm an esthetic sham!
This air severe
Is but a mere
Veneer!
This cynic smile
Is but a wile
Of guile!
This costume chaste
Is but good taste
Misplaced!
Let me confess
A languid love for lilies does *not* blight me!
Lank limbs and haggard cheeks do *not* delight me!
I do *not* care for dirty greens
By any means.
I do *not* long for all one sees
That's Japanese.
I am *not* fond of uttering platitudes
In stained-glass attitudes.
In short, my medievalism's affectation,
Born of a morbid love of admiration!

*Song*

If you're anxious for to shine in the high esthetic line as a man of culture rare,
You must get up all the germs of the transcendental terms, and plant them everywhere.
You must lie upon the daisies and discourse in novel phrases of your complicated state of mind,
The meaning doesn't matter if it's only idle chatter of a transcendental kind.
And every one will say
As you walk your mystic way,
"If this young man expresses himself in terms too deep for *me*,
Why, what a very singularly deep young man this deep young man must be!"

Be eloquent in praise of the very dull old days which have long since passed away,
And convince 'em, if you can, that the reign of good Queen Anne was Culture's palmiest day.
Of course you will pooh-pooh whatever's fresh and new, and declare it's crude and mean;
For art stopped short in the cultivated court of the Empress Josephine.
And every one will say
As you walk your mystic way,
"If that's not good enough for him which is good enough for *me*,
Why, what a very cultivated kind of youth this kind of youth must be!"

Then a sentimental passion of a vegetable fashion must excite your languid spleen,
An attachment *à la* Plato for a bashful young potato, or a not-too-French French bean!
Though the Philistines may jostle, you will rank as an apostle in the high esthetic band,
If you walk down Piccadilly, with a poppy or a lily in your medieval hand.
And every one will say,
As you walk your flowery way,

"If he's content with a vegetable love which would certainly
not suit *me*,
Why, what a particularly pure young man this pure young
man must be!"

## TO THE TERRESTRIAL GLOBE

(*By a Miserable Wretch*)

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!
Through pathless realms of Space
Roll on!
What though I'm in a sorry case?
What though I cannot meet my bills?
What though I suffer toothache's ills?
What though I swallow countless pills?
Never *you* mind!
Roll on!

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!
Through seas of inky air
Roll on!
It's true I've got no shirts to wear;
It's true my butcher's bill is due;
It's true my prospects all look blue—
But don't let that unsettle you!
Never *you* mind!
Roll on!

(*It rolls on.*)

## THE RIVAL CURATES

List while the poet trolls
Of Mr. Clayton Hooper,
Who had a cure of souls
At Spiffton-extra-Sooper.

He lived on curds and whey,
And daily sang their praises,
And then he'd go and play
With buttercups and daisies.

Wild croquet Hooper banned,
And all the sports of Mammon,
He warred with cribbage, and
He exorcised backgammon.

His helmet was a glance
That spoke of holy gladness;
A saintly smile his lance;
His shield a tear of sadness.

His Vicar smiled to see
This armor on him buckled:
With pardonable glee
He blessed himself and chuckled:

"In mildness to abound
My curate's sole design is;
In all the country round
There's none so mild as mine is!"

And Hooper, disinclined
His trumpet to be blowing,
Yet didn't think you'd find
A milder curate going.

A friend arrived one day
At Spiffton-extra-Sooper,
And in this shameful way
He spoke to Mr. Hooper.

"You think your famous name
For mildness can't be shaken,
That none can blot your fame—
But, Hooper, you're mistaken!

"Your mind is not as blank
As that of Hopley Porter,
Who holds a curate's rank
At Assesmilk-cum-Worter.

"*He* plays the airy flute,
And looks depressed and blighted,
Doves round about him 'toot,'
And lambkins dance delighted.

"He labors more than you
At worsted work, and frames it;
In old maids' albums too,
Sticks seaweed—yes, and names it!"

The tempter said his say,
Which pierced him like a needle—
He summoned straight away
His sexton and his beadle.

(These men were men who could
Hold liberal opinions:
On Sundays they were good—
On week-days they were minions.)

"To Hopley Porter go,
Your fare I will afford you—
Deal him a deadly blow,
And blessings shall reward you.

"But stay—I do not like
Undue assassination,
And so before you strike,
Make this communication:

"I'll give him this one chance—
If he'll more gayly bear him,
Play croquet, smoke and dance,
I willingly will spare him."

They went, those minions true,
To Assesmilk-cum-Worter,
And told their errand to
The Reverend Hopley Porter.

"What?" said that reverend gent,
"Dance through my hours of leisure?
Smoke?—bathe myself with scent?—
Play croquet? Oh, with pleasure!

"Wear all my hair in curl?
Stand at my door and wink—so—
At every passing girl?
My brothers, I should think so!

"For years I've longed for some
Excuse for this revulsion:
Now that excuse has come—
I do it on compulsion!"

He smoked and winked away—
This Reverend Hopley Porter—
The deuce there was to pay
At Assesmilk-cum-Worter.

And Hooper holds his ground,
In mildness daily growing—
They think him, all around,
The mildest curate going.

## THE PERIWINKLE GIRL

I've often thought that headstrong youths
Of decent education,
Determine all-important truths
With strange precipitation.

The over-ready victims they
Of logical illusions,
And in a self-assertive way
They jump at strange conclusions.

Now take my case: Ere sorrow could
My ample forehead wrinkle,
I had determined that I would
Not like to be a winkle.

"A winkle," I would oft advance
With readiness provoking,
"Can seldom flirt, and never dance,
Or soothe his mind by smoking."

In short, I spurned the shelly joy,
And spoke with strange decision:
Men pointed to me as a boy
Who held them in derision.

But I was young—too young by far—
Or I had been more wary:
I knew not then that winkles are
The stock-in-trade of Mary.

I had not seen her sunlight blithe
As o'er their shells it dances;
I've seen those winkles almost writhe
Beneath her beaming glances.

Both high and low and great and small
Fell prostrate at her tootsies;
They all were noblemen, and all
Had balances at Coutts's.

Dukes with the lovely maiden dealt,
Duke Bailey and Duke Humphy,
Who ate her winkles till they felt
Exceedingly uncomfy.

Duke Bailey greatest wealth computes,
And sticks, they say, at no-thing;
He wears a pair of golden boots,
And silver underclothing.

Duke Humphy, as I understand,
Though mentally acuter,
His boots are only silver, and
His underclothing pewter.

A third adorer had the girl,
A man of lowly station—
A miserable grov'ling Earl
Besought her approbation.

This humble cad she did refuse
With much contempt and loathing:
He wore a pair of leather shoes,
And cambric underclothing!

"Ha! ha!" she cried. "Upon my word!
Well, really—come, I never!
Oh, go along, it's too absurd!
My goodness! Did you ever?

"Two Dukes would make their Bowles a bride,
And from her foes defend her."
"Well, not exactly that," they cried,
"We offer guilty splendor.

"We do not offer marriage rite,
So please dismiss the notion!"
"Oh, dear!" said she: "that alters quite
The state of my emotion."

The Earl he up, and says, says he,
"Dismiss them to their orgies,
For I am game to marry thee
Quite reg'lar at St. George's."

He'd had, it happily befell,
A decent education,
His views would have befitted well
A far superior station.

His sterling worth had worked a cure,
She never heard him grumble;
She saw his soul was good and pure,
Although his rank was humble.

Her views of earldoms and their lot
All underwent expansion:
Come, Virtue in an earldom's cot!
Go, Vice in ducal mansion!

## ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Algernon Charles Swinburne was born in London, April 5, 1837. His father was Admiral Charles Henry Swinburne, descendant of an old Northumbrian family, and though the son was born in the capital, his boyhood was spent in the country, half the year at his grandfather's estate in Northumberland, the other half at his father's home on the Isle of Wight. Thus he was exposed to two contrary influences, although his poetry, full of southern luxuriance, reflects little of the rigorous north. After some private tuition, young Swinburne attended Eton for five years, Balliol College (Oxford) for three, and though he won a prize in Italian and French, left the University without taking a degree.

Immediately upon leaving Oxford, Swinburne published his first work, *The Queen Mother* and *Rosamund* (1860), two poetic dramas, eloquent enough in their own right and remarkable for a youth of twenty-three. Although the volume has an energetic sweep and freshness lacking in the later plays—being to his Mary Stuart trilogy what Wagner's "Tannhäuser" is to the "Ring"—the work passed unnoticed and Swinburne departed for Italy. His sojourn there, during which he became acquainted with Walter Savage Landor, was of short duration, but the richness of color and climate must have acted like a forcing-ground and quickened a seed ready for ripening. A few years later, *Atalanta in Calydon* (1865) attracted the attention of the *literati. Chastelard* (the first of the three tragedies dealing with Mary, Queen of Scots) followed and was respectfully considered. But Swinburne was not a name which held glamour until the publication of *Poems and Ballads* in 1866. Critics and the lay public were taken by storm. "There had been," says William Morton Payne in his introduction to Swinburne's *Selected Poems*, "no such sensation in English poetry since the appearance of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*." But whereas Byron's work was followed equally by the literary and unliterary, Swinburne's appealed—and still appeals—only to the poetic. By the end of his thirtieth year, his reputation was second to none in his time and country and Swinburne became a name for conjuration and controversy.

Influences were already noticeable, influences that, at first dis-

guised by the rush and roar of Swinburne's syllables, have become increasingly more apparent. *Atalanta in Calydon,* in spite of its attempt to mingle lyric abandon and tragic portentousness, is an exotic which, with its Greek mode and Attic idioms, has the taint of translation. Its ringing choruses are all that have survived, enlarging English poetry with new figures and rhythms. *Song of Italy* (1867) and *Songs Before Sunrise* (1871) reveal another side of the poet, the political insurgent—and another derivation. "His first book," Edmund Gosse admits in his comprehensive article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* "is deliberately Shakespearian in design and expression; the *Atalanta,* of course, is equally deliberate in its pursuit of the Hellenic spirit." *Poems and Ballads* is a hybrid in which the lank lilies of Pre-Raphaelitism are grafted on the evil flowers of Baudelaire—a lesser and lighter Baudelaire for, as Edward Thomas pointed out, his hymn to the roses and raptures of vice is "from the lips outward. In a spirit of gay and amateur perversity he flatters sin with appellations of virtue, as George Herbert gave his religious poetry the unction of love."

*Song of Italy* and *Songs Before Sunrise* present if not a *volte face* a new turn. Here Swinburne revolts against political and churchly conventions rather than against moral restraint. In *Poems and Ballads—Second Series* (1878) the forty-year-old Swinburne, discarding Baudelaire and Mazzini, devoted himself to Victor Hugo. He was now at the very peak of his creative—and adaptive—powers; volume after volume flew from under his facile hand. His *Study of Shakespeare* (1879) is a mixture of eloquence and exaggeration, a hearty instance of "the noble pleasure of praising" as opposed to pedantic dusting of dry bones. In 1880 he published three wholly different kinds of books: *Songs of the Springtides, Studies in Song* and *The Modern Heptalogia* (published anonymously), a set of devastating parodies subtitled "The Seven Against Sense" and containing mocking burlesques of Tennyson's pantheism, Browning's cacophony, Mrs. Browning's lax sentimentality, and Swinburne's own alliterative wordiness. The flow of verse grew still more voluminous after Swinburne met Theodore Watts-Dunton, poet and essayist, who guarded the erratic poet with the love of a brother and the scrutiny of a father and with whom he lived until his death. *Mary Stuart,* concluding the trilogy, appeared in 1881. Less than a year later, he had completed *Tristram of Lyonesse,* a shower of wild rockets compared to the domestic oil-lamps of *Idylls of the King,* restoring to Malory some of the grossness and strength which Tennyson had emasculated. Swinburne's versatility was emphasized by *A Century of Roundels* (1883) which, as the title suggests, contains a hundred variations of the French rondeau in a form which he himself devised, by

*A Midsummer Holiday* (1884), which extended his mannerisms, by *Marino Faliero* (1885), a far richer narrative than Byron's story on the same theme, by *Miscellanies* (1886), by the adroit *Astrophel* (1894), and by *The Tale of Balen* (1896), a faithfully versified section of the *Morte d'Arthur* in more than two thousand lines. And so on, without stock- or breath-taking, until *A Channel Passage and Other Poems* in 1904, in which year the eleven volume edition of his *Poems and Dramas* was begun. A short pause followed. Then a novel (*Love's Cross Currents*) rescued and revised from an old periodical, then the *Duke of Gardia* (1908). Then the richly accoutered *Age of Shakespeare*. Then death, after a sudden attack of pneumonia, at the home of Watts-Dunton (to whom he had dedicated his *Collected Edition*), April 10, 1909.

What remains of the huge mass of epics, Latin imitations, experiments, sestinas, ballades and double-ballades, excoriations, enthusiasms, *tours de force* in every conceivable meter? There remain, chiefly, the meters themselves and their resonance. Swinburne's phrasing and philosophy seem to matter little; we are no longer exercised by their morality or immorality. The fury is gone, only the sound is left. And even this, to be relished, has to be sampled sparingly. As Edmund Gosse was forced to concede, "The young lover of poetry, when first he encounters Swinburne's influence, is almost bound to be swept away by it; the wild, extravagant license, the apparent sincerity, the vigor and the verve, cry directly to the aspirations of youth like a clarion in the wilderness. But while this is inevitable, it is also true that the critical lover of poetry outgrows an unquestioning allegiance to the Swinburnian mood more quickly than any other of the diverse emotions aroused by the study of the great poets." Edward Thomas, whose *Algernon Charles Swinburne: A Critical Study* (1912) is a most penetrating synthesis, summarizes the lack of finality in Swinburne's smooth flowing phrases: "He can astonish and melt, but seldom thrill; and when he does it is not by any felicity of, as it were, God-given inevitable words. He has to depend on sound and an atmosphere of words which is now and then concentrated and crystallized into an intensity of effect which is almost magical, perhaps never quite magical. This atmosphere comes from a vocabulary very rich in words connected with objects, sensations, emotions of pleasure and beauty, but used somewhat lightly and even in appearance indiscriminately."

His philosophical verses, praised as much as the early "libidinous" lyrics were condemned, have suffered by reappraisal. To his generation Swinburne seemed both a dark, lawless satyr and a bright herald of new laws. He was, we see, neither. He was a rhyme-intoxicated genius whose vision of another heaven was

violent but vague, whose loose ideas were held in a set of fixed symbols, whose concept of liberty was little more than a large summoning of winds, seas and lightnings.

Swinburne's reliance on alliteration—the hall-mark of familiar parodies—degenerated into a trick that is first titillating, then amusing and finally wearisome. Nevertheless the weakness of his verse is not that it is too alliterative but too literary. His preoccupation is with life at second-hand, with its recording or rebellious spirits, rather than with life itself. Thus his volumes are crammed with tributes to poets, to Shelley, Sappho, Chaucer, Catullus, Sidney, Browning, Baudelaire, Gautier, Landor, with apostrophes to Carlyle, Hugo, Mazzini, Wagner, with sonnets to Massinger, Jonson, Webster and seventeen other Elizabethan dramatists. Here, as elsewhere, his rhythms so easily liberated dictate the course of his thought. The *élan* of the early "sulphurous" love poems also prompts the peans in praise of the creation of a United Italy and a restored French Republic. His sympathies, quickly aroused, were quickly sublimated; he had emotional rather than intellectual comprehension.

But if much of this poetry is a sea of syllables which first entice then engulf the reader; if, as Saintsbury says in what is meant to be a paragraph of praise, Swinburne planned "sea serpents in verse in order to show how easily and gracefully he can make them coil and uncoil," the metaphors remind us that no English poet has written more rapturously about the sea or with more passion for the renewal of spirit which that element symbolizes. Where Keats identifies himself with the nightingale, Shelley with the skylark, Poe with the raven, Swinburne's bird is, appropriately, the seamew. Yet after prolixity is forgotten, there persists the pantheistic pean of "Hertha," the Pre-Raphaelite picture of "Madonna Mia," the giddy music of "Itylus," "When the Hounds of Spring," "Hymn to Proserpine," "The Triumph of Time," "A Forsaken Garden" and a dozen others. The worst of Swinburne has been caricatured by himself in "Nephelidia" which begins:

From the depths of the dreamy decline of the dawn through a notable nimbus of nebulous noonshine,
Pallid and pink as the palm of the flag-flower that flickers with fear of the flies as they float
Are the looks of our lovers that lustrously lean from a marvel of mystic miraculous moonshine,
These that we feel in the blood of our blushes that thicken and threaten with throbs through the throat?

What is best lives in his lyrics, in the generous spirit and the impetuous movement of his syllables. Here is richness of sound

and spirit, a zest which, even in the later work, never outgrew headlong, eloquent, and often grandiloquent youth.

## THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

Here, where the world is quiet,
  Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
  In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest time and mowing,
  A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
  And men that laugh and weep,
Of what may come hereafter
  For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers
  And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,
  And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labor,
  Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
  And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
  No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
  Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes
Where no leaf blooms or blushes,
Save this whereout she crushes
  For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
And all disastrous things;

Dead dreams of days forsaken
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
And joy was never sure;
Today will die tomorrow;
Time stoops to no man's lure;
And love, grown faint and fretful
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives for ever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken
Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.

## SONG

Love laid his sleepless head
On a thorny rosy bed;
And his eyes with tears were red,
And pale his lips as the dead.

And fear and sorrow and scorn
Kept watch by his head forlorn.
Till the night was overworn
And the world was merry with morn.

And Joy came up with the day
And kissed Love's lips as he lay,
And the watchers ghostly and gray
Sped from his pillow away.

And his eyes as the dawn grew bright,
And his lips waxed ruddy as light:
Sorrow may reign for a night,
But day shall bring back delight.

## ITYLUS

Swallow, my sister, O sister swallow,
How can thine heart be full of the spring?
A thousand summers are over and dead.
What hast thou found in the spring to follow?
What hast thou found in thine heart to sing?
What wilt thou do when the summer is shed?

O swallow, sister, O fair swift swallow,
Why wilt thou fly after spring to the south,
The soft south whither thine heart is set?
Shall not the grief of the old time follow?
Shall not the song thereof cleave to thy mouth?
Hast thou forgotten ere I forget?

Sister, my sister, O fleet sweet swallow,
Thy way is long to the sun and the south;
But I, fulfilled of my heart's desire,
Shedding my song upon height, upon hollow,
From tawny body and sweet small mouth
Feed the heart of the night with fire.

I the nightingale all spring through,
O swallow, sister, O fair swift swallow,
All spring through till the spring be done,
Clothed with the light of the night on the dew,
Sing, while the hours and the wild birds follow,
Take flight and follow and find the sun.

Sister, my sister, O soft light swallow,
Though all things feast in the spring's guest-chamber,
How hast thou heart to be glad there of yet?
For where thou fliest I shall not follow,
Till life forget and death remember,
Till thou remember and I forget.

Swallow, my sister, O singing swallow,
I know not how thou hast heart to sing.
Hast thou the heart? is it all past over?
Thy lord the summer is good to follow,
And fair the feet of thy lover the spring:
But what wilt thou say to the spring thy lover?

O swallow, sister, O fleeting swallow,
My heart in me is a molten ember
And over my head the waves have met.
But thou wouldst tarry or I would follow,
Could I forget or thou remember,
Couldst thou remember and I forget.

O sweet stray sister, O shifting swallow
The heart's division divideth us.
Thy heart is light as a leaf of a tree;
But mine goes forth among sea-gulfs hollow
To the place of the slaying of Itylus,
The feast of Daulis, the Thracian sea.

O swallow, sister, O rapid swallow,
I pray thee sing not a little space.
Are not the roofs and the lintels wet?
The woven web that was plain to follow,
The small slain body, the flower-like face,
Can I remember if thou forget?

O sister, sister, thy first-begotten!
The hands that cling and the feet that follow.
The voice of the child's blood crying yet
*Who hath remembered me? who hath forgotten?*
Thou hast forgotten, O summer swallow,
But the world shall end when I forget.

## A LEAVE-TAKING

Let us go hence, my songs; she will not hear.
Let us go hence together without fear;
Keep silence now, for singing-time is over
And over all old things and all things dear.
She loves not you nor me as all we love her.
Yea, though we sang as angels in her ear,
She would not hear.

Let us rise up and part; she will not know.
Let us go seaward as the great winds go,
Full of blown sand and foam; what help is there?
There is no help, for all these things are so,
And all the world is bitter as a tear.
And how these things are, though ye strove to show,
She would not know.

Let us go home and hence; she will not weep,
We gave love many dreams and days to keep,
Flowers without scent, and fruits that would not grow,
Saying, "If thou wilt, thrust in thy sickle and reap."
All is reaped now; no grass is left to mow;
And we that sowed, though all we fell on sleep,
She would not weep.

Let us go hence and rest; she will not love.
She shall not hear us if we sing hereof,
Nor see love's ways, how sore they are and steep.
Come hence, let be, lie still; it is enough.
Love is a barren sea, bitter and deep;
And though she saw all heaven in flower above,
She would not love.

Let us give up, go down; she will not care.
Though all the stars made gold of all the air,
And the sea moving saw before it move
One moon-flower making all the foam-flowers fair;
Though all those waves went over us, and drove
Deep down the stifling lips and drowning hair
She would not care.

Let us go hence, go hence; she will not see.
Sing all once more together: surely she,
She too, remembering days and words that were,
Will turn a little toward us, sighing; but we,
We are hence, we are gone, as though we had not been there.
Nay, and though all men seeing had pity on me,
She would not see.

## FROM "THE TRIUMPH OF TIME"

I will go back to the great sweet mother,
Mother and lover of men, the sea.
I will go down to her, I and none other,
Close with her, kiss her and mix her with me;
Cling to her, strive with her, hold her fast;
O fair white mother, in days long past
Born without sister, born without brother,
Set free my soul as thy soul is free.

O fair green-girdled mother of mine,
Sea, that art clothed with the sun and the rain,
Thy sweet hard kisses are strong like wine,
Thy large embraces are keen like pain.
Save me and hide me with all thy waves,
Find me one grave of thy thousand graves,
Those pure cold populous graves of thine,
Wrought without hand in a world without stain.

I shall sleep, and move with the moving ships,
Change as the winds change, veer in the tide;
My lips will feast on the foam of thy lips,
I shall rise with thy rising, with thee subside;
Sleep, and not know if she be, if she were,
Filled full with life to the eyes and hair,
As a rose is fulfilled to the roseleaf tips
With splendid summer and perfume and pride.

This woven raiment of nights and days,
Were it once cast off and unwound from me,
Naked and glad would I walk in thy ways,
Alive and aware of thy ways and thee;

Clear of the whole world, hidden at home,
Clothed with the green and crowned with the foam,
A pulse of the life of thy straits and bays,
A vein in the heart of the streams of the sea.

Fair mother, fed with the lives of men,
Thou art subtle and cruel of heart, men say
Thou hast taken, and shalt not render again;
Thou art full of thy dead, and cold as they.
But death is the worst that comes of thee;
Thou art fed with our dead, O mother, O sea,
But when hast thou fed on our hearts? or when,
Having given us love, hast thou taken away?

O tender-hearted, O perfect lover,
Thy lips are bitter, and sweet thine heart.
The hopes that hurt and the dreams that hover,
Shall they not vanish away and apart?
But thou, thou art sure, thou art older than earth;
Thou art strong for death and fruitful of birth;
Thy depths conceal and thy gulfs discover;
From the first thou wert; in the end thou art.

## FROM "HYMN TO PROSERPINE"

### (AFTER THE PROCLAMATION IN ROME OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH)

*Vicisti, Galilæe*

Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the world has grown gray from thy breath;
We have drunken of things Lethean, and fed on the fullness of death.
Laurel is green for a season, and love is sweet for a day;
But love grows bitter with treason, and laurel outlives not May.
Sleep, shall we sleep after all? for the world is not sweet in the end;
For the old faiths loosen and fall, the new years ruin and rend.

Fate is a sea without shore, and the soul is a rock that abides;
But her ears are vexed with the roar and her face with the foam of the tides.
O lips that the live blood faints in, the leavings of racks and rods!
O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of gibbeted Gods!
Though all men abase them before you in spirit, and all knees bend,
I kneel not, neither adore you, but standing, look to the end.
All delicate days and pleasant, all spirits and sorrows are cast
Far out with the foam of the present that sweeps to the surf of the past;
Where beyond the extreme sea-wall, and between the remote sea-gates,
Waste water washes, and tall ships founder, and deep death waits:
Where, mighty with deepening sides, clad about with the seas as with wings,
And impelled of invisible tides, and fulfilled of unspeakable things,
White-eyed and poisonous finned, shark-toothed and serpentine-curled,
Rolls, under the whitening wind of the future, the wave of the world.
The depths stand naked in sunder behind it, the storms flee away;
In the hollow before it the thunder is taken and snared as a prey;
In its sides is the north-wind bound; and its salt is of all men's tears;
With light of ruin, and sound of changes, and pulse of years:
With travail of day after day, and with trouble of hour upon hour;
And bitter as blood is the spray; and the crests are as fangs that devour:
And its vapor and storm of its steam as the sighing of spirits to be;
And its noise as the noise in a dream; and its depth as the roots of the sea:

And the height of its heads as the height of the utmost stars of the air:
And the ends of the earth at the might thereof tremble, and time is made bare.
Will ye bridle the deep sea with reins, will ye chasten the high sea with rods?
Will ye take her to chain her with chains, who is older than all ye Gods?
All ye as a wind shall go by, as a fire shall ye pass and be past;
Ye are Gods, and behold ye shall die, and the waves be upon you at last.
In the darkness of time, in the deeps of the years, in the changes of things,
Ye shall sleep as a slain man sleeps, and the world shall forget you for kings.
Though the feet of thine high priests tread where thy lords and our forefathers trod,
Though these that were God's are dead and thou being dead art a God.
Though before thee the throned Cytherian be fallen, and hidden her head,
Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean, thy dead shall go down to thee dead.
Of the maiden thy mother, men sing as a goddess with grace clad around;
Thou art throned where another was king; where another was queen she is crowned.
Yea, once we had sight of another: but now she is queen, say these.
Not as thine, not as thine was our mother, a blossom of flowering seas,
Clothed round with the world's desire as with raiment, and fair as the foam,
And fleeter than kindled fire, and a goddess, and mother of Rome.
For thine came pale and a maiden, and sister to sorrow; but ours,
Her deep hair heavily laden with odor and color of flowers,
White rose of the rose-white water, a silver splendor, a flame,
Bent down unto us that besought her, and earth grew sweet with her name.

For thine came weeping, a slave among slaves, and rejected; but she
Came flushed from the full-flushed wave, and imperial, her foot on the sea,
And the wonderful waters knew her, the winds and the viewless ways,
And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the sea-blue stream of the bays.
Ye are fallen, our lords by what token? we wist that ye should not fall.
Ye were all so fair that are broken; and one more fair than ye all.
But I turn to her still, having seen she shall surely abide in the end;
Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me now and befriend.
O daughter of earth, of my mother, her crown and blossom of birth,
I am also, I also, thy brother; I go as I came unto earth.
In the night where thine eyes are as moons are in heaven, the night where thou art,
Where the silence is more than all tunes, where sleep overflows from the heart,
Where the poppies are sweet as the rose in our world, and the red rose is white,
And the wind falls faint as it blows with the fume of the flowers of the night.
And the murmur of spirits that sleep in the shadow of Gods from afar
Grows dim in thine ears and deep as the deep dim soul of a star,
In the sweet low light of thy face, under heavens untrod by the sun,
Let my soul with their souls find place, and forget what is done and undone.
Thou art more than the Gods who number the days of our temporal breath;
For these give labor and slumber; but thou, Proserpina, death.
Therefore now at thy feet I abide for a season in silence. I know
I shall die as my fathers died, and sleep as they sleep; even so.

For the glass of the years is brittle wherein we gaze for a span;
A little soul for a little bears up this corpse which is man.
So long I endure, no longer; and laugh not again, neither weep.
For there is no God found stronger than death; and death is a sleep.

## A BALLADE OF DREAMLAND

I hid my heart in a nest of roses,
Out of the sun's way, hidden apart;
In a softer bed than the soft white snow's is,
Under the roses I hid my heart.
Why would it sleep not? why should it start,
When never a leaf of the rose-trees stirred?
What made sleep flutter his wings and part?
Only the song of a secret bird.

Lie still, I said, for the wind's wing closes,
And mild leaves muffle the keen sun's dart;
Lie still, for the wind on the warm sea dozes,
And the wind is unquieter yet than thou art.
Does a thought in thee still as a thorn's wound smart?
Does the fang still fret thee of hope deferred?
What bids the lids of thy sleep dispart?
Only the song of a secret bird.

The green land's name that a charm encloses,
It never was writ in the traveler's chart,
And sweet on its trees as the fruit that grows is,
It never was sold in the merchant's mart.
The swallows of dreams through its dim fields dart,
And sleep's are the tunes in its tree-tops heard;
No hound's note wakens the wildwood hart,
Only the song of a secret bird.

*Envoi*

In the world of dreams I have chosen my part.
To sleep for a season and hear no word
Of true love's truth or of light love's art,
Only the song of a secret bird.

## TO A SEAMEW

When I had wings, my brother,
  Such wings were mine as thine:
Such life my heart remembers
In all as wild Septembers
As this when life seems other,
  Though sweet, than once was mine;
When I had wings, my brother,
  Such wings were mine as thine.

Such life as thrills and quickens
  The silence of thy flight,
Or fills thy note's elation
With lordlier exultation
Than man's whose faint heart sickens
  With hopes and fears that blight
Such life as thrills and quickens
  The silence of thy flight.

Thy cry from windward clanging
  Makes all the cliffs rejoice;
Though storm clothe seas with sorrow,
Thy call salutes the morrow;
While shades of pain seem hanging
  Round earth's most rapturous voice,
Thy cry from windward clanging
  Makes all the cliffs rejoice.

We, sons and sires of seamen,
  Whose home is all the sea,
What place man may, we claim it;
But thine—whose thought may name it?
Free birds live higher than freemen,
  And gladlier ye than we—
We, sons and sires of seamen,
  Whose home is all the sea.

For you the storm sounds only
  More notes of more delight
Than earth's in sunniest weather:
When heaven and sea together

Join strengths against the lonely
  Lost bark borne down by night,
For you the storm sounds only
  More notes of more delight.

With wider wing, and louder
  Long clarion-call of joy,
Thy tribe salutes the terror
Of darkness, wild as error,
But sure as truth, and prouder
  Than waves with man for toy;
With wider wing, and louder
  Long clarion-call of joy.

The wave's wing spreads and flutters,
  The wave's heart swells and breaks;
One moment's passion thrills it,
One pulse of power fulfills it,
And ends the pride it utters
  When, loud with life that quakes,
The wave's wing spreads and flutters,
  The wave's heart swells and breaks.

But thine and thou, my brother,
  Keep heart and wing more high
Than aught may scarce or sunder;
The waves whose throats are thunder
Fall hurtling each on other,
  And triumph as they die;
But thine and thou, my brother,
  Keep heart and wing more high.

More high than wrath or anguish,
  More strong than pride or fear.
The sense or soul half hidden
In thee, for us forbidden,
Bids thee nor change nor languish,
  But live thy life as here,
More high than wrath or anguish,
  More strong than pride or fear.

We are fallen, even we, whose passion
On earth is nearest thine;
Who sing, and cease from flying;
Who live, and dream of dying:
Gray time, in time's gray fashion,
Bids wingless creatures pine:
We are fallen, even we, whose passion
On earth is nearest thine.

The lark knows no such rapture,
Such joy no nightingale,
As sways the songless measure
Wherein thy wings take pleasure:
Thy love may no man capture,
Thy pride may no man quail;
The lark knows no such rapture,
Such joy no nightingale.

And we, whom dreams embolden,
We can but creep and sing
And watch through heaven's waste hollow
The flight no sight may follow
To the utter bourne beholden
Of none that lack thy wing:
And we, whom dreams embolden,
We can but creep and sing.

Our dreams have wings that falter,
Our hearts bear hopes that die;
For thee no dream could better
A life no fears may fetter,
A pride no care can alter,
That wots not whence or why
Our dreams have wings that falter,
Our hearts bear hopes that die.

With joy more fierce and sweeter
Than joys we deem divine
Their lives by time untarnished,
Are girt about and garnished,

Who match the wave's full meter
And drink the wind's wild wine
With joy more fierce and sweeter
Than joys we deem divine.

Ah, well were I for ever,
Wouldst thou change lives with me,
And take my song's wild honey,
And give me back thy sunny
Wide eyes that weary never,
And wings that search the sea;
Ah, well were I for ever,
Wouldst thou change lives with me.

## A FORSAKEN GARDEN

In a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland,
At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee,
Walled round with rocks as an inland island,
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.
A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses
The steep square slope of the blossomless bed
Where the weeds that grew green from the graves of its roses
Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,
To the low last edge of the long lone land.
If a step should sound or a word be spoken,
Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's hand?
So long have the gray bare walks lain guestless,
Through branches and briars if a man make way,
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless
Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled
That crawls by a track none turn to climb
To the strait waste place that the years have rifled
Of all but the thorns that are touched not of time.
The thorns he spares when the rose is taken;
The rocks are left when he wastes the plain.
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-shaken,
These remain.

Not a flower to be prest of the foot that falls not;
As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots are dry;
From the thicket of thorns whence the nightingale calls not,
Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.
Over the meadows that blossom and wither
Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song;
Only the sun and the rain come hither
All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels
One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
Only the wind here hovers and revels
In a round where life seems barren as death.
Here there was laughing of old, there was weeping,
Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping
Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, "Look thither,"
Did he whisper? "Look forth from the flowers to the sea;
For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-blossoms wither
And men that love lightly may die—but we?"
And the same wind sang and the same waves whitened,
And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,
In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that had lightened,
Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then went whither?
And were one to the end—but what end who knows?
Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,
As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.
Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love them?
What love was ever as deep as a grave?
They are loveless now as the grass above them
Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,
Not known of the cliffs and the fields and the sea.
Not a breath of the time that has been hovers
In the air now soft with a summer to be.

Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons hereafter
Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now or weep,
When as they that are free now of weeping and laughter
We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again forever;
Here change may come not till all change end.
From the graves they have made they shall rise up never,
Who have left nought living to ravage and rend.
Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground growing,
While the sun and the rain live, these shall be;
Till a last wind's breath upon all these blowing
Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble,
Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,
Till the strength of the waves of the high tides humble
The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink,
Here now in his triumph where all things falter,
Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand spread,
As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
Death lies dead.

## JOYEUSE GARDE[1]

The sun was heavy; no more shade at all
Than you might cover with a hollow cup
There was in the south chamber; wall by wall,
Slowly the hot noon filled the castle up,
One hand among the rushes, one let play
Where the loose gold began to swerve and droop
From his fair mantle to the floor, she lay;
Her face held up a little, for delight
To feel his eyes upon it, one would say;
Her grave shut lips were glad to be in sight

[1] Edmund Gosse says that it was Swinburne's custom to allow miscellaneous matter to collect on his table—proofs, bills, letters, prospectuses, manuscripts—until the litter reached formidable proportions. The poet would then pounce upon the pile, gather it up in the day's newspaper, and place it carefully upon a shelf, never to be touched again, unless by another parcel of the same sort laid beside it. This is one of the fourteen posthumous poems salvaged from this heterogeneous mass and printed in *The New York Evening Post* in 1919.

Of Tristram's kisses; she had often turned
Against her shifted pillows in the night
To lessen the sore pain wherein they burned
For want of Tristram; her great eyes had grown
Less keen and sudden, and a hunger yearned
Her sick face through, these wretched years agone.
Her eyes said "Tristram" now, but her lips held
The joy too close for any smile or moan
To move them; she was patiently fulfilled
With a slow pleasure that slid everwise
Even into hands and feet, but could not build
The house of its abiding in her eyes
Nor measure any music by her speech.
Between the sunlight came a noise of flies
To pain sleep from her, thick from peach to peach
Upon the bare wall's hot red level, close
Among the leaves too high for her to reach;
So she drew in and set her feet and rose
Saying, "Too late to sleep; I pray you speak
To save me from the noises. Lest I lose
Some minute of this season; I am weak
And cannot answer if you help me not,
When the shame catches on my brow and cheek."
For in the speaking all her face grew hot
And her mouth altered with some pain, I deem
Because her word had stung like a bad thought
That makes us recollect some bitter dream.
She bowed to let him kiss her and went on;
"All things are changed so, will this day not seem
Most sad and evil when I sit alone
Outside your eyes? Will it not vex my prayers
To think of laughter that is twin to moan
And happy words that make not holier?
Nathless I had good will to say one thing;
Though it seems pleasant in the late warm air
To ride alone and see the last of spring,
I cannot lose you, Tristram (a weak smile
Moved her lips and went out); men say the king
Hath set keen spies about for many a mile,
Quick hands to get them gold, sharp eyes to see
Where your way swerves across them; this long while
Hath Mark grown older with his hate of me,

And now his hand for lust to smite at us
Plucks the white hairs inside his beard that he
This year made thicker, seeing this he does
I pray you note that we may meet with him
At riding through the branchèd growth, and then
Our wine grow bitter at the golden rim
And taste of blood and tears, not meat to drink
As the new honey wherein juices swim
Of fair red vintage." Her voice done, I think
He had no heart to answer; yet some time
The noon outside them seemed to throb and sink
Wrought in the quiet to a rounded rhyme.
Then "certes" said he "this were harm to both
If spears grew thick between the beech and lime
Or amid reeds that let the river south;
Yet so I think you might get help of me;
Had I not heart to smile, when Iseult's mouth
Kissed Palomydes under a thick tree?
For I remember as the wind sets low
How all that peril ended quietly
In a green place where heavy sunflowers blow."

## MADONNA MIA

Under green apple boughs
That never a storm will rouse,
My lady hath her house
  Between two bowers;
In either of the twain
Red roses full of rain;
She hath for bondwomen
  All kind of flowers.

She hath no handmaid fair
To draw her curled gold hair
Through rings of gold that bear
  Her whole hair's weight;
She hath no maids to stand
Gold-clothed on either hand;
In all the great green land
  None is so great.

She hath no more to wear
But one white hood of vair
Drawn over eyes and hair,
  Wrought with strange gold,
Made for some great queen's head,
Some fair great queen since dead;
And one strait gown of red
  Against the cold.

Beneath her eyelids deep
Love lying seems asleep,
Love, swift to wake, to weep,
  To laugh to gaze;
Her breasts are like white birds,
And all her gracious words
As water-grass to herds
  In the June-days.

To her all dews that fall
And rains are musical;
Her flowers are fed from all,
  Her joys from these;
In the deep-feather firs
Their gift of joy is hers,
In the least breath that stirs
  Across the trees.

She grows with greenest leaves,
Ripens with reddest sheaves,
Forgets, remembers, grieves,
  And is not sad;
The quiet lands and skies
Leave light upon her eyes;
None knows her, weak or wise,
  Or tired or glad.

None knows, none understands,
What flowers are like her hands;
Though you should search all lands
  Wherein time grows,

What snows are like her feet,
Though his eyes burn with heat
Through gazing on my sweet,
  Yet no man knows.

Only this thing is said;
That white and gold and red,
God's three chief words, man's bread
  And oil and wine,
Were given her for dowers,
And kingdom of all hours,
And grace of goodly flowers
  And various wine.

This is my lady's praise:
God after many days
Wrought her in unknown ways,
  In sunset lands;
This was my lady's birth;
God gave her might and mirth
And laid his whole sweet earth
  Between her hands.

Under deep apple-boughs
My lady hath her house;
She wears upon her brows
  The flower thereof;
All saying but what God saith
To her is as vain breath;
She is more strong than death,
  Being strong as love.

## CHORUS

(*From "Atalanta in Calydon"*)

Before the beginning of years,
  There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears;
  Grief, with a glass that ran;

Pleasure, with pain for leaven;
  Summer, with flowers that fell;
Remembrance fallen from heaven,
  And madness risen from hell;
Strength without hands to smite;
  Love that endures for a breath;
Night, the shadow of light,
  And life, the shadow of death.
And the high gods took in hand
  Fire, and the falling of tears,
And a measure of sliding sand
  From under the feet of the years;
And froth and drift of the sea;
  And dust of the laboring earth;
And bodies of things to be
  In the houses of death and of birth;
And wrought with weeping and laughter,
  And fashioned with loathing and love,
With life before and after
  And death beneath and above,
For a day and a night and a morrow,
  That his strength might endure for a span
With travail and heavy sorrow,
  The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south
  They gathered as unto strife;
They breathed upon his mouth,
  They filled his body with life;
Eyesight and speech they wrought
  For the veils of the soul therein,
A time for labor and thought,
  A time to serve and to sin;
They gave him light in his ways,
  And love, and a space for delight,
And beauty and length of days,
  And night, and sleep in the night.
His speech is a burning fire;
  With his lips he travaileth;
In his heart is a blind desire,
  In his eyes foreknowledge of death;

He weaves, and is clothed with derision;
Sows, and he shall not reap;
His life is a watch or a vision
Between a sleep and a sleep.

## "WHEN THE HOUNDS OF SPRING"

(*From "Atalanta in Calydon"*)

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
The mother of months in meadow or plain
Fills the shadows and windy places
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;
And the brown bright nightingale amorous
Is half assuaged for Itylus,
For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quivers,
Maiden most perfect, lady of light,
With a noise of winds and many rivers,
With a clamor of waters, and with might;
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;
For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,
Round the feet of the day and the feet of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,
Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to her,
Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!
For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
And the southwest-wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;

And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
Ripe grasses trammel a traveling foot,
The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes
From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,
And the oat is heard above the lyre,
And the hoofèd heel of a satyr crushes
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
Follows with dancing and fills with delight
The Maenad and the Bassarid;
And soft as lips that laugh and hide
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,
And screen from seeing and leave in sight
The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;
The wild vine slipping down leaves bare
Her bright breast shortening into sighs;
The wild vine slips with the weight of its leaves,
But the berried ivy catches and cleaves
To the limbs that glitter, the feet that scare
The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

HERTHA

I am that which began;
Out of me the years roll;
Out of me God and man;
I am equal and Whole;
God changes, and man, and the form of them bodily; I am the soul.

Before ever land was,
Before ever the sea,
Or soft hair of the grass,
Or fair limbs of the tree,
Or the flesh-colored fruit of my branches, I was, and thy soul was in me.

First life on my sources
First drifted and swam;
Out of me are the forces
That save it or damn;
Out of me man and woman, and wild-beast and bird; before God was, I am.

Beside or above me
Nought is there to go;
Love or unlove me,
Unknow me or know,
I am that which unloves me and loves; I am stricken, and I am the blow.

I the mark that is missed
And the arrows that miss,
I the mouth that is kissed
And the breath in the kiss,
The search, and the sought, and the seeker, the soul and the body that is.

I am the thing which blesses
My spirit elate;
That which caresses
With hands uncreate
My limbs unbegotten that measure the length of the measure of fate.

But what thing dost thou now,
Looking Godward, to cry
"I am I, thou art thou,
I am low, thou art high?"
I am thou, whom thou seekest to find him; find thou but myself, thou art I.

I the grain and the furrow,
The plow-cloven clod
And the plowshare drawn thorough,
The germ and the sod,
The deed and the doer, the seed and the sower, the dust which is God.

Hast thou known how I fashioned thee,
Child, underground?
Fire that impassioned thee,
Iron that bound,
Dim changes of water, what thing of all these hast thou known of or found?

Canst thou say in thine heart
Thou hast seen with thine eyes
With what cunning of art
Thou wast wrought in what wise,
By what force of what stuff thou wast shapen, and shown on my breast to the skies?

. . . . . .

A creed is a rod,
And a crown is of night;
But this thing is God,
To be man with thy might,
To grow straight in the strength of thy spirit, and live out thy life as the light.

I am in thee to save thee,
As my soul in thee saith,
Give thou as I gave thee,
Thy life-blood and breath,
Green leaves of thy labor, white flowers of thy thought, and red fruit of thy death.

Be the ways of thy giving
As mine were to thee;
The free life of thy living,
Be the gift of it free;
Not as servant to lord, nor as master to slave, shalt thou give thee to me.

. . . . . .

Where dead ages hide under
The live roots of the tree,
In my darkness the thunder
Make utterance of me;
In the clash of my boughs with each other ye hear the waves sound of the sea.

That noise is of Time,
As his feathers are spread
And his feet set to climb
Through the boughs overhead,
And my foliage rings round him and rustles, and branches are bent with his tread.

The storm-winds of ages
Blow through me and cease,
The war-wind that rages,
The spring-wind of peace,
Ere the breath of them roughen my tresses, ere one of my blossoms increase.

All sounds of all changes,
All shadows and lights
On the world's mountain-ranges
And stream-riven heights,
Whose tongue is the wind's tongue and language of storm-clouds on earth-shaking nights;

All forms of all faces,
All works of all hands
In unsearchable places
Of time-stricken lands,
All death and all life, and all reigns and all ruins, drop through me as sands.

. . . . . .

I bid you but be;
I have need not of prayer;
I have need of you free
As your mouths of mine air;
That my heart may be greater within me, beholding the fruits of me fair.

Lo, winged with world's wonders,
With miracles shod,
With the fires of his thunders
For raiment and rod,
God trembles in heaven, and his angels are white with the terror of God.

For his twilight is come on him,
His anguish is here;
And his spirits gaze dumb on him,
Grown gray from his fear;
And his hour taketh hold on him stricken, the last of his infinite year.

Thought made him and breaks him,
Truth slays and forgives;
But to you, as time takes him,
This new thing it gives,
Even love, the beloved Republic, that feeds upon freedom and lives.

For truth only is living,
Truth only is whole,
And the love of his giving
Man's polestar and pole;
Man, pulse of my center, and fruit of my body, and seed of my soul.

One birth of my bosom;
One beam of mine eye:
One topmost blossom
That scales the sky;
Man, equal and one with me, man that is made of me, man that is I.

## JOHN TODHUNTER

John Todhunter was born December 30, 1839, in Dublin, received his education at York School and Trinity College, Dublin, and took his degrees of M.D. and M.Ch. there. He won the Vice Chancellors' Prize for verse in 1864, pursued his medical studies

in Vienna and Paris, and returned to practice in Ireland. After a few years he turned from medicine to letters, becoming professor of English Literature at Alexandria College, Dublin (1870-1874), traveled again, and finally settled in London, where he died in 1916.

Todhunter's first volume, *Laurella and Other Poems* (1876), scarcely distinguished itself, differing little from most initial ventures of the period. His next publication was more ambitious: *Alcestis, A Dramatic Poem* (1879) which was followed by *Forest Songs* (1881). Todhunter then occupied himself with Irish lore and his next book, *The Banshee and Other Poems* (1888), was composed of several longish poems founded on certain Bardic tales of Ireland. *Sounds and Sweet Airs* (1905) attempted, not too successfully, to evoke the musical atmosphere of Chopin, Schumann, and other romantic composers. Todhunter's *Essays* were posthumously published in 1920 and his *Collected Poems* were assembled in 1930.

Todhunter's verse is accomplished rather than acute. Its author was most at home in the ballads, particularly those of German persuasion. "The Grey Man"—one of his best—begins:

> A wild wind shakes the sashes,
> The Forester sits alone

which recalls its models more vividly than the scene. The influence is not unnatural since Todhunter spent much time in translations, having published his versions of Heine in *The Book of Songs* (1907).

His sonnets are reminiscent of Blunt's without having Blunt's intensity, although a few of them deserve better than the neglect which has fallen on almost all of Todhunter's work.

### LOVE AND LIFE

I met Love wandering in the fields of Life,
Whose arrows, winged with joy and barbed with pain,
Had marred his fair Olympian limbs in vain,
For with his dreaming eyes, blind to all strife,
He held his way, and, often left for slain,
Still rose, to spend his shafts on things despised,
Weak, sad, uncomely things. And I, surprised,
To see him idiot-like such mien maintain,
Questioned him as he passed why this was so.
Then, for all answer, with a martyr's smile,

He bent his golden bow, and all my heart
In sudden flame I found, and grew to know
Strange secrets of the melancholy Isle
Where Life and Love, the twins, were torn apart.

### GOLGOTHA

On his cross still hangs the Saviour,
Bears our sins in dreadful sum;
Eighteen centuries and three quarters,
Yet his kingdom is not come.

"It is finished!" Was it finished
When thy path of pain was trod?
Thou didst bear the sins of mortals.
Who shall bear the sins of God?

## THOMAS HARDY

Thomas Hardy was born at Upper Bockhampton, near Dorchester, June 2, 1840, of parents in humble circumstances, his father being a stone-mason. His schooling was fitful. When sixteen, he was apprenticed to an ecclesiastical architect. Later, he left his native village and worked in London, where he won the prize offered by the Royal Institute of British Architects. This was in 1863. A few years after, he abandoned architecture and, in 1871, his first novel, *Desperate Remedies*, was published anonymously. It was a failure, little attention being paid to the author until the publication of *Under the Greenwood Tree*. From that time on his success as a writer was assured; *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873) and *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874) securing his position at the outset.

It was not until he was almost sixty—in 1898, to be precise—that Hardy abandoned prose and challenged attention as a poet, verse having been the form of expression with which he began and, as many (including the editor and Hardy himself) believe, the form by which he will be remembered longest. Technically considered, the rhythms of his verse are, at first reading, irritatingly rude; his syntax is often clumsy; his language involved. But, beneath the surface crudities—and many of them are efforts to achieve particular effects—Hardy's poetry is as disciplined as it is original. If its idiom is sometimes overweighted, it corresponds to the large design and complexities of his thought. "It has," says

Dorothy Martin, in an essay on Hardy's lyrics, "an elemental power which, in its wide range of emotion, its sense of inner conflict between mind and heart, affords something like a counterpart in poetry to the art of Rodin in sculpture. To the horror of the orthodox, it has outwardly the same challenging roughnesses and acerbities; it has also the same profundity and stimulating power for those who, refusing to be put off by a difficult exterior, push on to the inner spirit of which this exterior is the vigorous, provocative but fitting expression."

As has been said, by Hardy himself, he "was *compelled* to give up verse for prose," but at no time did he prefer the many fictions which won him an international reputation. On the contrary, he was bitter that necessity had forced him to discontinue the creation of poetry for the writing of novels, and in private life would refer to the latter as "pot-boilers" and "wretched stuff." Nevertheless, between the ages of thirty-four and fifty-seven, Hardy published eleven novels and three collections of stories, of which *The Return of the Native* and *The Mayor of Casterbridge* are the sharpest in characterization although *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1896) caused more comment. The former started a controversy which grew into an attack, chiefly because of the social criticism which had been implicit in his previous work but which was now openly expressed. With greater violence, almost with vituperation, Hardy was called to account for *Jude the Obscure.* This further example of critical stupidity hurt Hardy so deeply that he said it "cured him of all interest in novel-writing."

Two years later he turned definitely and exclusively to poetry, publishing *Wessex Poems* (1898) with his own drawings, and *Poems of the Past and Present* (1902). Both volumes were respectfully but unenthusiastically received. Then, when Hardy was sixty-four years old and critics had casually decided that his power had waned, he published the first part of *The Dynasts* (1904), that epic which was to spread itself on the largest canvas of his time. By 1908 the work was complete, a huge drama of the Napoleonic Wars in three books, nineteen acts and one hundred and thirty scenes. This triumph is the apotheosis of the poet. Of it, the *London Times* wrote: "A work which combines as only a work of genius could combine, a poetic philosophy with minute historical knowledge and a shrewd eye for the tragical and comical ways of men and women." Lascelles Abercrombie, a most conservative appraiser, unhesitatingly called it "the biggest and most consistent exhibition of fatalism in literature."

As Hardy grew older, his poems increased, and his powers with them. Explaining the large number of verses written after his sixtieth year, he said that he would merely "go to a drawer and

take something out." But, although it is true that he resuscitated and refurbished many lyrics of an earlier period, Hardy continued to create new ones no less knotted, no less characteristically acrid, delicately nostalgic, pungently bitter-sweet, until he was almost ninety. When he was seventy-nine his *Collected Poems* (1919) displayed the range and fecundity but not the end of his gifts. As an octogenarian, he published *Late Lyrics and Earlier* (1922), *Human Shows: Far Phantasies, Songs and Trifles* (1925) and *Winter Words in Various Moods and Metres*, which, though appearing posthumously, had been arranged and selected by Hardy before his death.

Hardy died in his eighty-eighth year on January 11, 1928, depriving contemporary England of its most honored author. Although his ashes were placed in Westminster Abbey, his heart (as requested in his Will) was buried in the churchyard of his own village, in the soil he loved so faithfully.

His work resists a pat synthesis. Hardy wrote in almost every manner, good and bad, in every meter, old and new, mixing novelty and banality, dropping heavy cacophonies into the lightest melodies, balancing the profound with the trivial, the cosmic with the comic. Most readers prefer him in that curiously lyric-narrative style which he perfected, but his intensities escape category. Each of his collections runs the gamut of life and its reflection in literature, and his style follows the scale. Modern and ancient, his technique is as advanced as the youngest contemporary's, as formal as a poetic ballet-master's. "In the Servants' Quarters" is a splendid instance of Hardy's talk-flavored verse, which ascends from casual speech on a *crescendo* of dramatic effect, to a half-expected yet startling climax. In quite another manner, his *Satires of Circumstance* (reminding an American reader of Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*, which it anticipated) are epigrammatic vignettes in which he condensed whole domestic dramas. "The Dark-Eyed Gentlemen," on the other hand, is as simple-spontaneous as a folk-tune and quite unlike Hardy's other verse.

Hardy's resources are seemingly endless. At one moment he plays the pathetic fanciful as in "The Tree and the Lady," the next moment he strikes the ironically bizarre in "Ah, Are You Digging on My Grave?" "In Time of 'The Breaking of Nations'" packs an epic into twelve quiet-colored lines; "In the Suburbs" is a purely objective delineation in black and white; "The Oxen" turns a superstition to tender humor. And though each of these is a lyric and all are straightforward in rhythm, each has its own dexterous difference in meter. It has passed unnoted, but Hardy even ventured into the French Forms for occasional effects; "The Roman Road" is as neat a rondeau as Austin Dobson ever fash-

ioned; "Winter in Durnover Field" is thoroughly Hardyesque and yet it is a precise if unusual triolet.

Hardy's questioning the beneficence of Nature led to accusations of pessimism, a charge that he continually but ineffectually denied. Actually the poet was an unorthodox moralist whose heart went out to the things, people and elements he loved. These elements—as he says ironically in "New Year's Eve," affirmatively in "The Subalterns"—are not actuated either by blind hate or blinder chance, but are subject to laws beyond the rules of logic. Hardy denied no God, but sensed design in chaos. Even when he could not rationalize a universe struggling to establish order in imperfection, he praised it, "hoping it might be so."

As a believer he accepts all experience, every "crass casualty," and though his philosophy contains little personal exultation, it voices the cry for unity. Even his ungainly poems have an apprehension and substance that reduce the dexterities of many of his contemporaries to airy ephemerae. Though the surface of his verse is often roughened by verbal excrescences, the essential content is pure, because Hardy's responses, unaffected by current theorizing, were strangely single and pure.

In the brief note preceding Hardy's contribution in *Great Names* (1926) Siegfried Sassoon wrote, "Without laboring the analogy between poetry and religion, it may be said that sham poetry is as pernicious as sham religion; and that for poets a merely poetical state of mind is as dangerous as a religious belief based on superficial religious emotion. That is why Hardy's poetry of experience is so significant. He records with microscopic exactitude, preserving a flawless artistic integrity. . . . In his short poems he fuses all that he has learned from the past and endured in the present, in a supreme imaginative vision with masterly and original craft in words and subtle ironic sense. He realizes that the true satisfaction of life lies in imaginative conflict. Whatever their ultimate purpose, men are alive only while they struggle. When they grow aware of the futility of their effort, and yet strive to fashion something from it, they become noble and tragic. Such is Hardy; but his despair is mitigated by tenderness and pity for his fellows. . . . With a wistful understanding he surveys the human scene."

No consideration of Hardy could end on a finer coda.

Three excellent studies of Hardy, presenting the novelist and poet from three distinctly different points of view, are those by Lionel Johnson (1894), Lascelles Abercrombie (1912) and Ernst Brennecke (1925).

## IN TIME OF "THE BREAKING OF NATIONS"

Only a man harrowing clods
  In a slow silent walk,
With an old horse that stumbles and nods
  Half asleep as they stalk.

Only thin smoke without flame
  From the heaps of couch grass:
Yet this will go onward the same
  Though Dynasties pass.

Yonder a maid and her wight
  Come whispering by;
War's annals will fade into night
  Ere their story die.

## THE DARKLING THRUSH

I leaned upon a coppice gate
  When Frost was specter-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
  The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
  Like strings from broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
  Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
  The Century's corpse outleant;
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
  The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
  Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
  Seemed fervorless as I.

At once a voice burst forth among
  The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
  Of joy unlimited;

An aged thrush, frail, gaunt and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

## THE MAN HE KILLED

"Had he and I but met
By some old ancient inn,
We should have sat us down to wet
Right many a nipperkin!

"But ranged as infantry,
And staring face to face,
I shot at him as he at me,
And killed him in his place.

"I shot him dead because—
Because he was my foe,
Just so: my foe of course he was;
That's clear enough; although

"He thought he'd 'list, perhaps,
Off-hand-like—just as I—
Was out of work—had sold his traps—
No other reason why.

"Yes; quaint and curious war is!
You shoot a fellow down
You'd treat, if met where any bar is,
Or help to half-a-crown."

## IN THE SERVANTS' QUARTERS

"Man, you too, aren't you, one of these rough followers of the criminal?
All hanging hereabout to gather how he's going to bear
Examination in the hall." She flung disdainful glances on
The shabby figure standing at the fire with others there,
Who warmed them by its flare.

"No, indeed, my skipping maiden: I know nothing of the trial here,
Or criminal, if so he be.—I chanced to come this way,
And the fire shone out into the dawn, and morning airs are cold now;
I, too, was drawn in part by charms I see before me play,
That I see not every day."

"Ha, ha!" then laughed the constables who also stood to warm themselves,
The while another maiden scrutinized his features hard,
As the blaze threw into contrast every knot and line that wrinkled them,
Exclaiming, "Why, last night when he was brought in by the guard,
You were with him in the yard!"

"Nay, nay, you teasing wench, I say! You know you speak mistakenly.
Cannot a tired pedestrian who has legged it long and far
Here on his way from northern parts, engrossed in humble marketings,
Come in and rest awhile, although judicial doings are
Afoot by morning star?"

"O, come, come!" laughed the constables. "Why, man, you speak the dialect
He uses in his answers; you can hear him up the stairs.
So own it. We sha'n't hurt ye. There he's speaking now! His syllables
Are those you sound yourself when you are talking unawares,
As this pretty girl declares."

"And you shudder when his chain clinks!" she rejoined. "O yes, I noticed it.
And you winced, too, when those cuffs they gave him echoed to us here.
They'll soon be coming down, and you may then have to defend yourself
Unless you hold your tongue, or go away and keep you clear
When he's led to judgment near!"

"No! I'll be damned in hell if I know anything about the man!
No single thing about him more than everybody knows!
Must not I even warm my hands but I am charged with blasphemies?" . . .
—His face convulses as the morning cock that moment crows,
And he droops, and turns, and goes.

## NEW YEAR'S EVE

"I have finished another year," said God,
"In gray, green, white and brown;
I have strewn the leaf upon the sod,
Sealed up the worm within the clod,
And let the last sun down."

"And what's the good of it?" I said,
"What reasons made you call
From formless void this earth we tread,
When nine-and-ninety can be read
Why nought should be at all?

"Yea, Sire; why shaped you us, 'who in
This tabernacle groan'—
If ever a joy be found herein,
Such joy no man had wished to win
If he had never known!"

Then he: "My labors—logicless—
You may explain; not I:
Sense-sealed I have wrought, without a guess
That I evolved a Consciousness
To ask for reasons why.

"Strange that ephemeral creatures who
By my own ordering are,
Should see the shortness of my view,
Use ethic tests I never knew,
Or made provision for!"

He sank to raptness as of yore,
And opening New Year's Day
Wove it by rote as theretofore,
And went on working evermore
In his unweeting way.

## WEATHERS

This is the weather the cuckoo likes,
And so do I;
When showers betumble the chestnut spikes,
And nestlings fly;
And the little brown nightingale bills his best,
And they sit outside the "Traveler's Rest,"
And maids come forth sprig-muslin drest,
And citizens dream of the South and West,
And so do I.

This is the weather the shepherd shuns,
And so do I;
When beeches drip in browns and duns,
And thresh, and ply;
And hill-hid tides throb, throe on throe,
And meadow rivulets overflow,
And drops on gate-bars hang in a row,
And rooks in families homeward go,
And so do I.

## "AH, ARE YOU DIGGING ON MY GRAVE?"

"Ah, are you digging on my grave
My beloved one?—planting rue?"
—"No: yesterday he went to wed
One of the brightest wealth has bred,
'It cannot hurt her now,' he said,
'That I should not be true.'"

"Then who is digging on my grave?
My nearest, dearest kin?"
—"Ah, no: they sit and think, 'What use!
What good will planting flowers produce?
No tendance of her mound can loose
Her spirit from Death's gin.'"

"But some one digs upon my grave?
My enemy?—prodding sly?"
—"Nay: when she heard you had passed the Gate
That shuts on all flesh soon or late,
She thought you no more worth her hate,
And cares not where you lie."

"Then, who is digging on my grave?
Say—since I have not guessed!"
—"O it is I, my mistress dear,
Your little dog, who still lives near,
And much I hope my movements here
Have not disturbed your rest?"

"Ah, yes! *You* dig upon my grave. . . .
Why flashed it not on me
That one true heart was left behind!
What feeling do we ever find
To equal among human kind
A dog's fidelity!"

"Mistress, I dug upon your grave
To bury a bone, in case
I should be hungry near this spot
When passing on my daily trot.
I am sorry, but I quite forgot
It was your resting-place."

## FIVE "SATIRES OF CIRCUMSTANCE"

### IN CHURCH

"And now to God the Father," he ends,
And his voice thrills up to the topmost tiles:
Each listener chokes as he bows and bends,
And emotion pervades the crowded aisles.

Then the preacher glides to the vestry-door,
And shuts it, and thinks he is seen no more.

The door swings softly ajar meanwhile,
And a pupil of his in the Bible class,
Who adores him as one without gloss or guile,
Sees her idol stand with a satisfied smile
And reënact at the vestry-glass
Each pulpit gesture in deft dumb-show
That had moved the congregation so.

### BY HER AUNT'S GRAVE

"Sixpence a week," says the girl to her lover,
"Aunt used to bring me, for she could confide
In me alone, she vowed. It was to cover
The cost of her headstone when she died.
And that was a year ago last June;
I've not yet fixed it. But I must soon."

"And where is the money now, my dear?"
"O, snug in my purse. . . . Aunt was *so* slow
In saving it—eighty weeks, or near." . . .
"Let's spend it," he hints. "For she won't know.
There's a dance tonight at the *Load of Hay*."
She passively nods. And they go that way.

### AT THE ALTAR-RAIL

"My bride is not coming, alas!" says the groom,
And the telegram shakes in his hand. "I own
It was hurried! We met at a dancing-room
When I went to the Cattle-Show alone,
And then, next night, where the Fountain leaps,
And the Street of the Quarter-Circle sweeps.

"Aye, she won me to ask her to be my wife—
'Twas foolish perhaps!—to forsake the ways
Of the flaring town for a farmer's life.
She agreed. And we fixed it. Now she says:

*'It's sweet of you, dear, to prepare me a nest,*
*But a swift, short, gay life suits me best.*
*What I really am you have never gleaned;*
*I had eaten the apple ere you were weaned.'"*

### IN THE RESTAURANT

"But hear. If you stay, and the child be born,
It will pass as your husband's with the rest,
While, if we fly, the teeth of scorn
Will be gleaming at us from east to west;
And the child will come as a life despised.
I feel an elopement is ill-advised!"

"O you realize not what it is, my dear,
To a woman! Daily and hourly alarms
Lest the truth should out. How can I stay here
And nightly take him into my arms!
Come to the child no name or fame,
Let us go, and face it, and bear the shame."

### AT THE DRAPER'S

"I stood at the back of the shop, my dear,
But you did not perceive me.
Well, when they deliver what you were shown
*I* shall know nothing of it, believe me!"

And he coughed and coughed as she paled and said,
"O, I didn't see you come in there—
Why couldn't you speak?"—"Well, I didn't. I left
That you should not notice I'd been there.

"You were viewing some lovely things. *'Soon required*
*For a widow, of latest fashion';*
And I knew 'twould upset you to meet the man
Who had to be cold and ashen

"And screwed in a box before they could dress you
*'In the last new note in mourning,'*
As they defined it. So, not to distress you,
I left you to your adorning."

## A PLACID MAN'S EPITAPH

As for my life, I've led it
With fair content and credit:
It said: "Take this." I took it:
Said: "Leave." And I forsook it.
If I had done without it
None would have cared about it,
Or said: "One has refused it
Who might have meetly used it."

## AFTERWARDS

When the Present has latched its postern behind my tremulous stay,
And the May month flaps its glad green leaves like wings,
Delicate-filmed as new-spun silk, will the neighbors say,
"He was a man who used to notice such things"?

If it be in the dusk when, like an eyelid's soundless blink,
The dewfall-hawk comes crossing the shades to alight
Upon the wind-warped upland thorn, a gazer may think,
"To him this must have been a familiar sight."

If I pass during some nocturnal blackness, mothy and warm,
When the hedgehog travels furtively over the lawn,
One may say, "He strove that such innocent creatures should come to no harm,
But he could do little for them; and now he is gone."

If, when hearing that I have been stilled at last, they stand at the door,
Watching the full-starred heavens that winter sees,
Will this thought rise on those who will meet my face no more,
"He was one who had an eye for such mysteries"?

And will any say when my bell of quittance is heard in the gloom,
And a crossing breeze cuts a pause in its outrollings,
Till they rise again, as they were a new bell's boom,
"He hears it not now, but used to notice such things"?

## WINTER IN DURNOVER FIELD

SCENE.—*A wide stretch of fallow ground recently sown with wheat, and frozen to iron hardness. Three large birds walking about thereon, and wistfully eyeing the surface. Wind keen from north-east: sky a dull gray.*

*Rook:* Throughout the field I find no grain;
The cruel frost encrusts the cornland!
*Starling:* Aye: patient pecking now is vain
Throughout the field, I find . . .
*Rook:* No grain!
*Pigeon:* Nor will be, comrade, till it rain,
Or genial thawings loose the lorn land
Throughout the field.
*Rook:* I find no grain:
The cruel frost encrusts the cornland!

## THE ROMAN ROAD

The Roman Road runs straight and bare
As the pale parting-line in hair
Across the heath. And thoughtful men
Contrast its days of Now and Then,
And delve, and measure, and compare;

Visioning on the vacant air
Helmed legionnaires, who proudly rear
The Eagle, as they pace again
The Roman Road.

But no tall brass-helmed legionnaire
Haunts it for me. Uprises there
A mother's form upon my ken,
Guiding my infant steps, as when
We walked that ancient thoroughfare,
The Roman Road.

## THE TREE AND THE LADY

I have done all I could
For that lady I knew! Through the heats I have shaded her,
Drawn to her songsters when summer has jaded her,
Home from the heath or the wood.

At the mirth-time of May,
When my shadow first lured her, I'd donned my new bravery
Of greenth: 'twas my all. Now I shiver in slavery,
Icicles grieving me gray.

Plumed to every twig's end
I could tempt her chair under me. Much did I treasure her
During those days she had nothing to pleasure her;
Mutely she used me as friend.

I'm a skeleton now,
And she's gone, craving warmth. The rime sticks like skin to me;
Through me Arcturus peers; Nor'lights shoot into me;
Gone is she, scorning my bough!

## SNOW IN THE SUBURBS

Every branch big with it,
Bent every twig with it;
Every fork like a white web-foot;
Every street and pavement mute:
Some flakes have lost their way, and grope back upward, when
Meeting those meandering down they turn and descend again.
The palings are glued together like a wall,
And there is no waft of wind with the fleecy fall.

A sparrow enters the tree
Whereon immediately
A snow-lump thrice his own slight size
Descends on him and showers his head and eyes.
And overturns him,
And near inurns him,
And lights on a nether twig, when its brush
Starts off a volley of other lodging lumps with a rush.

The steps are a blanched slope,
Up which, with feeble hope,
A black cat comes, wide-eyed and thin;
And we take him in.

## "MY SPIRIT WILL NOT HAUNT THE MOUND"

My spirit will not haunt the mound
Above my breast,
But travel, memory-possessed,
To where my tremulous being found
Life largest, best.

My phantom-footed shape will go
When nightfall grays
Hither and thither along the ways
I and another used to know
In backward days.

And there you'll find me, if a jot
You still should care
For me, and for my curious air;
If otherwise, then I shall not,
For you, be there.

## THE DARK-EYED GENTLEMAN

I pitched my day's leazings [1] in Crimmercrock Lane,
To tie up my garter and jog on again,
When a dear dark-eyed gentleman passed there and said,
In a way that made all o' me color rose-red,
"What do I see—
O pretty knee!"
And he came and he tied up my garter for me.

'Twixt sunset and moonrise it was, I can mind:
Ah, 'tis easy to lose what we nevermore find!—
Of the dear stranger's home, of his name, I knew nought,
But I soon knew his nature and all that it brought.
Then bitterly
Sobbed I that he
Should ever have tied up my garter for me!

[1] "Leazings"; bundles of gleaned corn.

Yet now I've beside me a fine lissom lad,
And my slip's nigh forgot, and my days are not sad;
My own dearest joy is he, comrade, and friend,
He it is who safe-guards me, on him I depend;
No sorrow brings he,
And thankful I be
That his daddy once tied up my garter for me!

## THE SUBALTERNS

"Poor wanderer," said the leaden sky,
"I fain would lighten thee,
But there be laws in force on high
Which say it must not be."

"I would not freeze thee, shorn one," cried
The North, "knew I but how
To warm my breath, to slack my stride;
But I am ruled as thou."

"Tomorrow I attack thee, wight,"
Said Sickness. "Yet I swear
I bear thy little ark no spite,
But am bid enter there."

"Come hither, Son," I heard Death say;
"I did not will a grave
Should end thy pilgrimage today,
But I, too, am a slave!"

We smiled upon each other then,
And life to me wore less
Of that fell guise it wore ere when
They owned their passiveness.

## THE OXEN

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock,
"Now they are all on their knees,"
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where
They dwelt in their strawy pen,
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years! Yet, I feel,
If some one said on Christmas Eve,
"Come; see the oxen kneel

"In the lonely barton [1] by yonder coomb [2]
Our childhood used to know,"
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

### WAITING BOTH

A star looks down at me,
And says: "Here I and you
Stand, each in our degree:
What do you mean to do—
Mean to do?"

I say: "For all I know,
Wait, and let Time go by,
Till my change come."—"Just so,"
The star says: "So mean I—
So mean I."

## WILFRID SCAWEN BLUNT

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt was born at Petworth House, Crawley, Sussex, in 1840. He was educated at St. Mary's College, Oscott, and was a member of the diplomatic service from 1858 to 1870. He spent many years in the East, his observations making him strongly sympathetic to lesser nationalities and all the down-trodden. Traveling in North Africa, Asia Minor and Arabia in the late seventies, all he saw caused him to support the Islamic movement, and to oppose the British government's control until his death. He favored the cause of the Egyptians; his voice was lifted

[1] Barton: farmyard.
[2] Coomb: valley, hollow.

for justice to Ireland; he joined Lloyd George in condemning the Boer war.

As a poet, he is best known by his *The Love Sonnets of Proteus* (1881) and *The New Pilgrimage* (1889). Both volumes reveal a deep, philosophical nature expressing itself in terms of high seriousness. A collected edition of his works was published in 1914, and, in 1923, *Selected Poems*, edited by Floyd Dell, was brought out in America.

His remarkable *My Diaries* [*1888-1914*] appeared when Blunt was an octogenarian, in 1921; a work which its British publisher quickly withdrew from the market because of its blunt revelations of British secret diplomacy. Shortly before his death, he wrote, "I have lived my life in full. No life is perfect that has not been lived youth in feeling, manhood in battle, old age in meditation." Blunt died in London, September 11, 1922.

Although Blunt produced a considerable body of verse, little of it survives. His experiments in assonance and echoing vowels are interesting mainly to the technician; his sonnet sequences, for all their attempts at dramatic narration, are sadly "dated." Three or four of his sonnets have the ring of true metal, and "The Desolate City" moves like an ebbing melody. However, says T. Earle Welby in *A Popular History of English Poetry*, "to have married Byron's granddaughter, bred Arab horses, and been admired by Henley and George Wyndham is to have made a great deal of life."

## ON THE SHORTNESS OF TIME

If I could live without the thought of death,
Forgetful of time's waste, the soul's decay,
I would not ask for other joy than breath
With light and sound of birds and the sun's ray.
I could sit on untroubled day by day
Watching the grass grow, and the wild flowers range
From blue to yellow and from red to gray
In natural sequence as the seasons change.
I could afford to wait, but for the hurt
Of this dull tick of time which chides my ear.
But now I dare not sit with loins ungirt
And staff unlifted, for death stands too near.
I must be up and doing—aye, each minute.
The grave gives time for rest when we are in it.

## THE TWO HIGHWAYMEN

I long have had a quarrel set with Time
Because he robb'd me. Every day of life
Was wrested from me after bitter strife:
I never yet could see the sun go down
But I was angry in my heart, nor hear
The leaves fall in the wind without a tear
Over the dying summer. I have known
No truce with Time nor Time's accomplice, Death.
The fair world is the witness of a crime
Repeated every hour. For life and breath
Are sweet to all who live; and bitterly
The voices of these robbers of the heath
Sound in each ear and chill the passer-by.
—What have we done to thee, thou monstrous Time?
What have we done to Death that we must die?

## THE DESOLATE CITY

Dark to me is the earth. Dark to me are the heavens.
Where is she that I loved, the woman with eyes like stars?
Desolate are the streets. Desolate is the city.
A city taken by storm, where none are left but the slain.

Sadly I rose at dawn, undid the latch of my shutters,
Thinking to let in light, but I only let in love.
Birds in the boughs were awake; I listen'd to their chaunting;
Each one sang to his love; only I was alone.

This, I said in my heart, is the hour of life and of pleasure.
Now each creature on earth has his joy, and lives in the sun,
Each in another's eyes finds light, the light of compassion,
This is the moment of pity, this is the moment of love.

Speak, O desolate city! Speak, O silence in sadness!
Where is she that I loved in my strength, that spoke to my soul?
Where are those passionate eyes that appeal'd to my eyes in passion?
Where is the mouth that kiss'd me, the breast I laid to my own?

Groping I went, as blind. I sought her house, my belovèd's.
There I stopp'd at the silent door, and listen'd and tried the latch.
Love, I cried, dost thou slumber? This is no hour for slumber,
This is the hour of love, and love I bring in my hand.

I knew the house, with its windows barr'd, and its leafless fig-tree,
Climbing round by the doorstep, the only one in the street;
I knew where my hope had climb'd to its goal and there encircled
All that those desolate walls once held, my belovèd's heart.

There in my grief she consoled me. She loved me when I loved not
She put her hand in my hand, and set her lips to my lips.
She told me all her pain and show'd me all her trouble.
I, like a fool, scarce heard, hardly return'd her kiss.

Weeping strangled my voice. I call'd out, but none answer'd;
Blindly the windows gazed back at me, dumbly the door;
She whom I love, who loved me, look'd not on my yearning,
Gave me no more her hands to kiss, show'd me no more her soul.

Therefore the earth is dark to me, the sunlight blackness,
Therefore I go in tears and alone, by night and day;
Therefore I find no love in heaven, no light, no beauty,
A heaven taken by storm, where none are left but the slain!

## FAREWELL

Farewell, then. It is finished. I forgo
With this all right in you, even that of tears.
If I have spoken hardly, it will show
How much I loved you. With you disappears
A glory, a romance of many years.
What you may be henceforth I will not know.
The phantom of your presence on my fears
Is impotent at length for weal or woe.

Your past, your present, all alike must fade
In a new land of dreams where love is not.
Then kiss me and farewell. The choice is made
And we shall live to see the past forgot,
If not forgiven. See, I came to curse,
Yet stay to bless. I know not which is worse.

### LAUGHTER AND DEATH

There is no laughter in the natural world
Of beast or fish or bird, though no sad doubt
Of their futurity to them unfurled
Has dared to check the mirth-compelling shout.
The lion roars his solemn thunder out
To sleeping woods. The eagle screams her cry.
Even the lark must strain a serious throat
To hurl his blest defiance at the sky.

Fear, anger, jealousy, have found a voice.
Love's pain or rapture the brute bosoms swell.
Nature has symbols for her nobler joys,
Her nobler sorrows. Who has dared foretell
That only man, by some sad mockery,
Should learn to laugh who learns that he must die?

## AUSTIN DOBSON

(Henry) Austin Dobson was born at Plymouth, in 1840, and was educated in Wales and on the Continent. In 1856, he received a clerkship in The Board of Trade and remained in official life a great part of his life.

His first collection, *Vignettes in Rhyme* (1873), attracted attention by the ease with which the author managed his dexterous and most difficult effects. With *Proverbs in Porcelain* (1877), *Old World Idylls* (1883), and *At the Sign of the Lyre* (1885), it was evident that a new master of *vers de société* had arisen. The crispness and clean delicacy of his verse make him the peer of Prior, Praed and sometimes of Thomas Hood.

During the latter part of his life, he devoted himself to a type of semi-biographical essay, intended to preserve the spirit of some nearly or wholly forgotten celebrity. In this form, his prose is scarcely less distinctive than his verse; his detailed and charmingly

dispensed knowledge of the time of Queen Anne gives to his writings its own special flavor of "archaic gentility."

His *Complete Poetical Works*, contained in a volume of over five hundred closely printed pages, display his resourcefulness in all modes, especially the French forms. Although most of his rhymes are charming rather than profound, certain pages, like the famous rondeau "In After Days" and "Before Sedan," are memorable for their serious clarity. "Ars Victrix" is something more than an admonition; it is a craftsman's confession of faith which any artist might heed.

Once in a while, as in "The Prayer of the Swine to Circe" and "The Sick Man and the Birds," Dobson attempted a note wholly solemn, but in spite of the occasional pathos masked in graceful dominos, he is enjoyed most—and deservedly so—for the frivolous triolets made of rose-leaves and the ballades compounded of nothing graver than "the ripple of laughing rhyme."

Dobson died at the height of his popularity, September 3, 1921.

## "FAREWELL, RENOWN!"

Farewell, Renown! Too fleeting flower,
That grows a year to last an hour;
  Prize of the race's dust and heat,
  Too often trodden under feet,—
Why should I court your "barren dower"?

Nay; had I Dryden's angry power,
The thews of Ben, the wind of Gower,
  Not less my voice should still repeat
    "Farewell, Renown!"

Farewell! Because the Muses' bower
Is filled with rival brows that lower;
  Because, howe'er his pipe be sweet,
  The Bard, that "pays," must please the street;
But most . . . because the grapes are sour—
    "Farewell, Renown!"

## BEFORE SEDAN

*"The dead hand clasped a letter."*
—Special Correspondence.

Here in this leafy place
  Quiet he lies,
Cold with his sightless face
  Turned to the skies;
'Tis but another dead;
All you can say is said.

Carry his body hence,—
  Kings must have slaves;
Kings climb to eminence
  Over men's graves:
So this man's eye is dim;—
Throw the earth over him.

What was the white you touched,
  There, at his side?
Paper his hand had clutched
  Tight ere he died;—
Message or wish, may be;
Smooth the folds out and see.

Hardly the worst of us
  Here could have smiled!
Only the tremulous
  Words of a child;
Prattle, that has for stops
Just a few ruddy drops.

Look. She is sad to miss,
  Morning and night,
His—her dead father's—kiss;
  Tries to be bright,
Good to mamma, and sweet.
That is all. "Marguerite."

Ah, if beside the dead
  Slumbered the pain!
Ah, if the hearts that bled
  Slept with the slain!
If the grief died;—but no.
Death will not have it so.

## ARS VICTRIX

(*Imitated from Théophile Gautier*)

Yes; when the ways oppose—
  When the hard means rebel,
Fairer the work out-grows,—
  More potent far the spell.

O Poet, then, forbear
  The loosely sandaled verse,
Choose rather thou to wear
  The buskin—strait and terse;

Leave to the tyro's hand
  The limp and shapeless style,
See that thy form demand
  The labor of the file.

Sculptor, do thou discard
  The yielding clay, consign
To Paros marble hard
  The beauty of thy line;

Model thy Satyr's face
  For bronze of Syracuse;
In the veined agate trace
  The profile of thy Muse.

Painter, that still must mix
  But transient tints anew,
Thou in the furnace fix
  The firm enamel's hue.

All passes. Art alone
  Enduring stays to us;
The Bust outlasts the throne,
  The Coin, Tiberius;

Even the gods must go;
  Only the lofty Rhyme
Not countless years o'erthrow,
  Not long array of time.

Paint, chisel, then, or write;
  But, that the work surpass,
With the hard fashion fight,
  With the resisting mass.

## ROSE-LEAVES

### A KISS

Rose kissed me today.
Will she kiss me tomorrow?
Let it be as it may,
Rose kissed me today
But the pleasure gives way
  To a savor of sorrow.
Rose kissed me today,—
  *Will* she kiss me tomorrow?

### A GREEK GIFT

Here's a present for Rose,
  How pleased she is looking!
Is it verse? Is it prose?
  Here's a present for Rose!
"*Plats*," "*Entrées*," and "*Rôts*,"—
  Why, it's "Gouffé on Cooking"!
*Here's* a present for Rose,
  How *pleased* she is looking.

### "URCEUS EXIT"

I intended an Ode,
  And it turned to a Sonnet.
It began à la mode,
I intended an Ode;
But Rose crossed the road
  In her latest new bonnet;
I intended an Ode;
  And it turned to a Sonnet.

### IN VAIN TODAY

In vain today I scrape and blot:
  The nimble words, the phrases neat,
  Decline to mingle or to meet;
My skill is all foregone—forgot.

He will not canter, walk nor trot,
  My Pegasus. I spur, I beat,
    In vain today!

And yet 'twere sure the saddest lot
  That I should fail to leave complete
  One poor . . . the rhyme suggests "conceit!"
Alas! 'Tis all too clear I'm not
    In *vein* today.

### THE BALLADE OF PROSE AND RHYME

When the ways are heavy with mire and rut,
  In November fogs, in December snows,
When the North Wind howls, and the doors are shut,—
  There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
  But whenever a scent from the whitethorn blows,
And the jasmine-stars at the casement climb,
  And a Rosalind-face at the lattice shows,
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

When the brain gets dry as an empty nut,
  When the reason stands on its squarest toes,
When the mind (like a beard) has a "formal cut,"—
  There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
  But whenever the May-blood stirs and glows,
And the young year draws to the "golden prime,"
  And Sir Romeo sticks in his ear a rose,
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

In a theme where the thoughts have a pedant-strut,
  In a changing quarrel of "Ayes" and "Noes,"
In a starched procession of "If" and "But,"—
  There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
  But wherever a soft glance softer grows,
And the light hours dance to the trysting-time,
  And the secret is told "that no one knows,"
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

*Envoy*

In the work-a-day world, for its needs and woes,
There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever the May-bells clash and chime,
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

## IN AFTER DAYS

In after days when grasses high
O'ertop the stone where I shall lie,
  Though ill or well the world adjust
  My slender claim to honored dust,
I shall not question or reply.

I shall not see the morning sky;
I shall not hear the night-wind's sigh;
  I shall be mute, as all men must
    In after days!

But yet, now living, fain were I
That some one then should testify,
Saying—"He held his pen in trust
To Art, not serving shame or lust."
Will none?—Then let my memory die
In after days!

## CHARLES DOUGHTY

Charles (Montagu) Doughty was born in 1843 at Suffolk, and his eighty-three years were filled with a variety and strangeness rare in the strangest and most varied of lives. He studied for the law; then decided to enter the navy; turned from the sea to science, pursuing his studies in geology through three universities. His educational career was equally mixed. He attended Cambridge and Oxford; went abroad to the universities of Leyden and Louvain. His travels brought him to Norway, where he lived a year, to Italy where he remained for several years, to France, Spain, Greece, Tunis and Algeria. It was in Damascus he discovered a passion that was to last him the rest of his life: the passion for Arabia. After learning different Arabic dialects, he joined a caravan to make researches in old stone inscriptions. He became separated from his companions, wandered in the desert for two years, was taken prisoner, was released and, after almost fatal escapades, kept himself alive by treating sick Arabs with a small supply of drugs he had maintained.

In Doughty's late thirties, he began compiling, from notebooks kept during travel, his large prose work. In 1888 *Travels in Arabia Deserta* was first published. Though formidable in proportion and difficult in style, the book was recognized as a masterpiece. Its idiom proved the chief barrier to popularity—the language being a mixture of heavy Orientalism and early English archaism—and twenty years later Edward Garnett undertook an abridgement of the *magnum opus*, issuing it under the title of *Wanderings in Arabia* (1908). No book before or since—including T. E. Lawrence's *Revolt in the Desert* (1927)—has interpreted Arabia with such vivid power and indubitable authority.

Doughty's poetry—of which seven volumes appeared before his death—presents to the casual reader the same obstacles as his prose. *Dawn in Britain* (1906), the most imposing of his verse, *Adam Cast Forth* (1908), *The Titans* (1916), *Mansoul, or The Riddle of the World* (1920) are so rankly overgrown with archaic eccentricities as to seem, at first glance, impenetrable. But once Doughty's code is deciphered the reader is rewarded with a mes-

sage whose whole import may still elude him, but whose impact is unquestionable. This is a poetry of accretion and accumulation, not a poetry of telling details. It is so knit in a kind of gnarled unity, so intricately epic, that brief quotation is impossible; one must go to any of his volumes—preferably to *Dawn in Britain*—to get the first full flavor of his quality.

Doughty died in his eighty-fourth year, in 1926.

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## ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY

The Irish-English singer, Arthur (William Edgar) O'Shaughnessy, was born in London in 1844. He was connected, for a while, with the British Museum, and was transferred later to the Department of Natural History. His first literary success, *Epic of Women* (1870), promised a splendid future for the young poet, a promise strengthened by *Music and Moonlight* (1874). Always delicate in health, his hopes were dashed by periods of illness and an early death in London in 1881.

The poems here reprinted, like all of O'Shaughnessy's, owe much to their editors. The "Ode," which is one of the classics of his age, originally had seven verses, the last four being mediocre tuneful versifying. When Palgrave compiled his *Golden Treasury*, he recognized the great difference between the first three inspired stanzas and the others—and calmly and courageously dropped the final four.

William Alexander Percy recently performed a similar service for this singer who, nine-tenths of the time, was an undistinguished minor poet. It is a series of liberties he has taken in his *Poems of Arthur O'Shaughnessy* (1922), but the editorial omissions are justifiable. As he says, "in O'Shaughnessy's case, it is the only way to save him from himself and for posterity." One hesitates to approve such cavalier disposals; one would like to believe that a poet should be protected against editorial excisions. But no one ever called for the blue pencil more imperatively than O'Shaughnessy. He allowed his melodic stream, thin at the best, to trickle out into the merest flow of sound and all but disappear in rivulets of rhyme.

### ODE

We are the music-makers,
  And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
  And sitting by desolate streams;

World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample an empire down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself with our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

## THE NEW LOVE AND THE OLD

I made another garden, yea,
For my new Love:
I left the dead rose where it lay
And set the new above.
Why did my Summer not begin?
Why did my heart not haste?
My old Love came and walk'd therein,
And laid the garden waste.

She enter'd with her weary smile,
Just as of old;
She look'd around a little while
And shiver'd with the cold:
Her passing touch was death to all,
Her passing look a blight;
She made the white rose-petals fall,
And turn'd the red rose white.

Her pale robe clinging to the grass
Seem'd like a snake
That bit the grass and ground, alas!
And a sad trail did make.
She went up slowly to the gate,
And then, just as of yore,
She turn'd back at the last to wait
And say farewell once more.

### DOOM

In either mood, to bless or curse
God bringeth forth the breath of man;
No angel sire, no woman nurse
Shall change the work that God began.

One spirit shall be like a star,
He shall delight to honor one:
Another spirit he shall mar:
None shall undo what God hath done.

## GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

Gerard Manley Hopkins was born in 1844, became a Jesuit, and was an instructor in Greek and Greek meters at University College in Dublin. Although he wrote much during an intensely spiritual life, none of his poetry appeared during his lifetime, and it was not until thirty years after his death that his extraordinary verse was collected. Hopkins died in 1898 and the world was not given the *Poems of Gerard Hopkins, Now First Published, with Notes by Robert Bridges* until 1919. Many of the verses in this posthumous volume were deciphered from manuscript by the Poet-Laureate and it is to him that one must be grateful for rescuing the work of a most original though complicated mind from oblivion.

A reader of Hopkins should expect obstacles; he must be prepared for difficulties that, at first, seem insuperable. He must be willing to accept a series of musical dissonances, compared to which the most cacophonous passages in Browning are limpid and bird-like. He must penetrate obscurities which are cloudy to the point of being unintelligible. But he will be rewarded. Behind the tortured constructions and heaped-up epithets there is magnificence. In spite of the verbal excesses and idiomatic oddities there

is an originality of vision which is nothing less than startling. In its intimate fancifulness, the imagery is sometimes reminiscent of the more controlled extravagances of Emily Dickinson. Like the New England poetess, Hopkins' poetry is sometimes eccentric, but it is always logical, never arbitrary or perverse.

Hopkins himself worked out a curious scheme of prosody (he even invented a system of signs to make plain the effects he wished to achieve) and his lines (as his own preface tells us) are "written in Running Rhythm, the common rhythm in English use, some in Sprung Rhythm (a free beat strongly suggestive of later *vers libre*) and some in a mixture of both." The peculiar beauty in his poems makes it lamentable that Hopkins (to quote his editor) "died when, to judge by his latest work, he was beginning to concentrate the force of all his luxuriant experiments in rhythm and diction, and castigate his art into a more reserved style." Even in the cloudiest of his effects there is a splendor, a rush of rhyme, a cataract of color, attained by scarcely any of his plainer-speaking contemporaries.

Even the most outspoken admirer of this highly imaginative and highly elliptical poetry must admit its structural awkwardness. Hopkins himself wrote, "No doubt my poetry errs on the side of oddness. I hope in time to have a more balanced and Miltonic style. But as air, melody, is what strikes me most of all in music, and design in painting, so design, pattern, or what I am in the habit of calling *inscape* is what above all I aim at in poetry. Now it is the virtue of design, pattern, or 'inscape' to be distinctive, and it is the vice of distinctiveness to become queer. This vice I cannot have escaped." Yet Dr. Robert Bridges has made too much of Hopkins' mannerisms. If these poems, Bridges comments, "were to be arraigned for errors of what might be called taste, they might be convicted of occasional affectation in metaphor, as where the hills are 'as a stallion stalwart, very-violet-sweet' " . . . As Robert Graves and Laura Riding inquire in *A Survey of Modernist Poetry*, "Why cannot what Dr. Bridges calls a fault of taste, an affectation, in the description of hills as 'a stallion stalwart, very-violet-sweet' be, with the proper sympathy for Hopkins' enthusiasm, appreciated as a phrase reconciling the two seemingly opposed qualities of mountains, their male, animal-like roughness and strength and, at the same time, their ethereal quality under soft light for which the violet in the gentle eye of the horse makes exactly the proper association?"

Continually daring, his work has never the note of ostentatious bravado. His boldness is instinctive; even such extraordinary departures as "Hurrahing in Harvest" and "Felix Randal" are extensions of the sonnet form but not violations of its spirit.

Hopkins' epithets may seem erratic but they are actually if oddly precise. As with his punctuation, he could give a rule for everything, even for the frequent and deliberate omission of the relative pronoun which he dropped not only "to crowd out every merely grammatical or toneless element" but to stress the heavy accents of his verse. "The Habit of Perfection," "The Golden Echo," its companion piece, "The Leaden Echo," and "God's Grandeur" will not be shaken out of the mind. If "emphasis seems to oust euphony" in a struggle of intense contractions, his style, pushed by the extremities of his theories, is a triumph of elisions. Far from being a "fascinating failure" (T. Earle Welby's summary), his poetry lifts exact if unfamiliar verity of phrase to a burning beauty.

## PIED BEAUTY

Glory be to God for dappled things—
For skies as couple-colored as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscapes plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and plow;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.
All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise Him.

## THE HABIT OF PERFECTION

Elected Silence, sing to me
And beat upon my whorlèd ear,
Pipe me to pastures still, and be
The music that I care to hear.

Shape nothing, lips; be lovely-dumb;
It is the shut, the curfew sent
From there where all surrenders come
Which only makes you eloquent.

Be shellèd, eyes, with double dark
And find the uncreated light:
This ruck and reel which you remark
Coils, keeps, and teases simple sight.

Palate, the hatch of tasty lust,
Desire not to be rinsed with wine:
The can must be so sweet, the crust
So fresh that come in fasts divine!

Nostrils, your careless breath that spend
Upon the stir and keep of pride,
What relish shall the censers send
Along the sanctuary side!

O feel-of-primrose hands, O feet
That want the yield of plushy sward,
But you shall walk the golden street
And you unhouse and house the Lord.

And, Poverty, be thou the bride
And now the marriage feast begun,
And lily-colored clothes provide
Your spouse not labored-at nor spun.

## THE LEADEN ECHO

How to keep—is there any any, is there none such, nowhere known, some bow or brooch or braid or brace, lace, latch or catch or key to keep
Back beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty, . . . from vanishing away?
Oh, is there no frowning of these wrinkles, ranked wrinkles deep,
Down? no waving-off of these most mournful messengers, still messengers, sad and stealing messengers of gray?
No, there's none, there's none—oh, no, there's none!
Nor can you long be, what you now are, called fair—
Do what you may do, do what you may,
And wisdom is early to despair:
Be beginning; since, no, nothing can be done
To keep at bay
Age and age's evils—hoar hair,
Ruck and wrinkle, drooping, dying, death's worst, winding sheets, tombs and worms and tumbling to decay;
So be beginning, be beginning to despair.
Oh, there's none—no, no, no, there's none:

Be beginning to despair, to despair,
Despair, despair, despair, despair.

## THE GOLDEN ECHO

Spare!
There is one, yes, I have one (Hush there!);
Only not within seeing of the sun,
Not within the singeing of the strong sun,
Tall sun's tingeing, or treacherous the tainting of the earth's air,
Somewhere elsewhere there is ah, well, where! one,
One. Yes, I can tell such a key, I do know such a place,
Where whatever's prized and passed of us, everything that's fresh and fast-flying of us, seems to us sweet of us and swiftly away with, done away with, undone,
Undone, done with, soon done with, and yet dearly and dangerously sweet
Of us, the wimpled-water-dimpled, not-by-morning-matchèd face,
The flower of beauty, fleece of beauty, too too apt to, ah! to fleet,
Never fleets more, fastened with the tenderest truth
To its own best being and its loveliness of youth: it is an everlastingness of, O it is an all youth!
Come then, your ways and airs and looks, locks, maiden gear, gallantry and gayety and grace,
Winning ways, airs innocent, maiden manners, sweet looks, loose locks, long locks, lovelocks, gaygear, going gallant, girlgrace—
Resign them, sign them, seal them, send them, motion them with breath,
And with sighs soaring, soaring sighs deliver
Then; beauty-in-the-ghost, deliver it, early now, long before death
Give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty, back to God, beauty's self and beauty's giver.
See; not a hair is, not an eyelash, not the least lash lost; every hair
Is, hair of the head, numbered.

Nay, what we had lighthanded left in surely the mere mold
Will have waked and have waxed and have walked with the
wind whatwhile we slept,
This side, that side hurling a heavyheaded hundredfold
What while we, while we slumbered.
O then, weary then why should we tread? O why are we so
haggard at the heart, so care-coiled, care-killed, so fagged,
so fashed, so cogged, so cumbered,
When the thing we freely forfeit is kept with fonder a care,
Fonder a care kept than we could have kept it, kept
Far with fonder a care (and we, we should have lost it) finer,
fonder
A care kept.—Where kept? Do but tell us where kept, where.—
Yonder.—What high as that! We follow, now we follow.—
Yonder, yes, yonder, yonder,
Yonder.

## GOD'S GRANDEUR

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, mornings, at the brown brink eastward, springs—
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

## THE STARLIGHT NIGHT

Look at the stars! look, look up at the skies!
O look at all the fire-folk sitting in the air!
The bright boroughs, the circle-citadels there!
Down in dim woods the diamond delves! the elves'-eyes!

The gray lawns cold where gold, where quickgold lies!
Wind-beat whitebeam! airy abeles set on a flare!
Flake-doves sent floating forth at a farmyard scare!
Ah, well! it is all a purchase, all is a prize.
Buy then! bid then!—What?—Prayer, patience, alms, vows.
Look, look: a May-mess, like an orchard bough's!
Look! March-bloom, like on mealed-with-yellow sallows!
These are indeed the barn; withindoors house
The shocks. This piece-bright paling shuts the spouse
Christ home, Christ and his mother and all his hallows.

## SPRING

Nothing is so beautiful as spring—
When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;
Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;
The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush
The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush
With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?
A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning
In Eden garden.—Have, get, before it cloy,
Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,
Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,
Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

## HURRAHING IN HARVEST

Summer ends now; now, barbarous in beauty, the stooks rise
Around; up above, what wind-walks! what lovely behavior
Of silk-sack clouds! has wilder, willful-wavier
Meal-drift molded ever and melted across skies?

I walk, I lift up, I lift up heart, eyes,
Down all that glory in the heavens to glean our Saviour;
And, eyes, heart, what looks, what lips yet gave you a
Rapturous love's greeting of realer, of rounder replies?

And the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding shoulder
Majestic—as a stallion stalwart, very-violet-sweet!—
These things, these things were here and but the beholder
Wanting; which two when they once meet,
The heart rears wings bold and bolder
And hurls for him, O half hurls earth for him off under his feet.

## THE CAGED SKYLARK

As a dare-gale skylark scanted in a dull cage
Man's mounting spirit in his bone-house, mean house, dwells—
That bird beyond the remembering his free fells;
This in drudgery, day-laboring-out life's age.

Though aloft on turf or perch or poor low stage,
Both sing sometimes the sweetest, sweetest spells,
Yet both droop deadly sometimes in their cells
Or wring their barriers in bursts of fear or rage.

Not that the sweet-fowl, song-fowl, needs no rest—
Why, hear him, hear him babble and drop down to his nest,
But his own nest, wild nest, no prison.

Man's spirit will be flesh-bound when found at best,
But uncumbered: meadow-down is not distressed
For a rainbow footing it nor he for his bones risen.

## FELIX RANDAL

Felix Randal the farrier, O he is dead then? my duty all ended,
Who have watched his mold of man, big-boned and hardy-handsome
Pining, pining, till time when reason rambled in it and some
Fatal four disorders, fleshed there, all contended?

Sickness broke him. Impatient he cursed at first, but mended
Being anointed and all; though a heavenlier heart began some
Months earlier, since I had our sweet reprieve and ransom
Tendered to him. Ah, well, God rest him all road ever he offended!

This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears.
My tongue had taught thee comfort, touch had quenched thy tears,
Thy tears that touched my heart, child, Felix, poor Felix Randal;

How far from then forethought of, all thy more boisterous years,
When thou at the random grim forge, powerful amidst peers,
Didst fettle for the great gray drayhorse his bright and battering sandal!

## TO HIS WATCH

(*Unfinished*)

Mortal my mate, bearing my rock-a-heart
Warm beat with cold beat company, shall I
Earlier or you fail at our force, and lie
The ruins of, rifled, once a world of art?
The telling time our task is; time's some part,
Not all, but we were framed to fail and die—
One spell and well that one. There, ah, thereby
Is comfort's carol of all or woe's worst smart.

Field-flown the departed day no morning brings
Saying "This was yours" with her, but new one, worse,
And then that last and shortest . . .

## "I HAVE DESIRED TO GO"

I have desired to go
Where springs not fail,
To fields where flies no sharp and sided hail,
And a few lilies blow.

And I have asked to be
Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb
And out of the swing of the sea.

Robert (Seymour) Bridges was born October 23, 1844. He was educated at Eton and Corpus Christi, Oxford, and, after having traveled, studied medicine, taking the post of Casualty Surgeon at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. He retired from the medical profession in 1882, devoting himself entirely to literature. Although many more prominent poets were suggested for the office, the classic restraint of his verse won him the highest official honor: he became Poet Laureate in 1913. So often has the Laureateship been nothing more than a political prize that it is gratifying to observe that the award went to one distinguished for nothing more zealous than his art. As essayist, he wrote considerably for the Society of Pure English which, largely through his efforts, was founded in 1913.

The subjects of his many volumes are indicative of his expression; a few of the titles are: *Prometheus the Firegiver; Eros and Psyche; Achilles in Scyros; The Feast of Bacchus. Poems* appeared as early as 1873. His more recent work, although not strictly modern, is closer in spirit to our own time. The distinguishing features of his *Shorter Poems* (1894) are a subtlety of rhythm, a precise command of metrical delicacies. It is, in fact, as a metrician that his work is most interesting; even his most academic lines bear a beauty of pattern. Apart from the skill of versification, there are many delights for the most casual reader in his collected *Poetical Works* (excluding the dramas) which appeared in 1913.

Two more recent volumes, *October and Other Poems* (1920) and *New Poems* (1925), amplify the loveliness which lies just beneath the surface of Bridges' work.

Even those who have praised Bridges' work for its delicate music have been tardy in their acknowledgment of his subtle originality. Without straining for novelty, his balanced melodies continually surprise by their small departures from the singing line and their unexpected but just epithets.

Besides his creative work, Bridges has compiled two anthologies, *The Spirit of Man* (1916) and *The Chilswell Book of Poetry* (1924), and has collaborated in the editing of a hymnal.

In his eighty-sixth year, the poet laureate published his longest and what many consider his most important poem. *The Testament of Beauty* (1929) embodies a spirit scholarly but vital, radical at an age where conservatism is the norm; at one time authoritative and experimental. It is a philosophic rather than a lyric work, and, like Wordsworth's "Excursion" which probably influenced it, it is likely to be more discussed than examined. But its nobility is apparent to the most careless eye and, whether or not Bridges'

technical devices have permanence, the poem sustains its length, rising on a wave of spiritual optimism.

Bridges died after a short illness on April 21, 1930.

## WINTER NIGHTFALL

The day begins to droop,—
  Its course is done:
But nothing tells the place
  Of the setting sun.

The hazy darkness deepens,
  And up the lane
You may hear, but cannot see,
  The homing wain.

An engine pants and hums
  In the farm hard by:
Its lowering smoke is lost
  In the lowering sky.

The soaking branches drip,
  And all night through
The dropping will not cease
  In the avenue.

A tall man there in the house
  Must keep his chair:
He knows he will never again
  Breathe the spring air:

His heart is worn with work;
  He is giddy and sick
If he rise to go as far
  As the nearest rick:

He thinks of his morn of life,
  His hale, strong years;
And braves as he may the night
  Of darkness and tears.

## LONDON SNOW

When men were all asleep the snow came flying,
In large white flakes falling on the city brown,
Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely lying,
  Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town;
Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing;
Lazily and incessantly floating down and down;
  Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing;
Hiding difference, making unevenness even,
Into angles and crevices softly drifting and sailing.
  All night it fell, and when full inches seven
It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,
The clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven;
  And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed brightness
Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare:
The eye marveled—marveled at the dazzling whiteness;
  The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn air;
No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,
And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.
  Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling;
They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze
Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snow-balling;
  Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees;
Or peering up from under the white-mossed wonder,
"O look at the trees!" they cried. "O look at the trees!"
  With lessened load, a few carts creak and blunder,
Following along the white deserted way,
A country company long dispersed asunder:
  When now already the sun, in pale display
Standing by Paul's high dome, spread forth below
His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day.
  For now doors open, and war is waged with the snow;
And trains of somber men, past tale of number,
Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil they go:
  But even for them awhile no cares encumber
Their minds diverted; the daily word is unspoken,
The daily thoughts of labor and sorrow slumber
At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for the charm
    they have broken.

## NIGHTINGALES

Beautiful must be the mountains whence ye come,
And bright in the fruitful valleys the streams wherefrom
Ye learn your song:
Where are those starry woods? O might I wander there,
Among the flowers, which in that heavenly air
Bloom the year long!

Nay, barren are those mountains and spent the streams:
Our song is the voice of desire, that haunts our dreams,
A throe of the heart,
Whose pining visions dim, forbidden hopes profound,
No dying cadence nor long sigh can sound,
For all our art.

Alone, aloud in the raptured ear of men
We pour our dark nocturnal secret; and then,
As night is withdrawn
From these sweet-springing meads and bursting boughs of May,
Dream, while the innumerable choir of day
Welcome the dawn.

## I HAVE LOVED FLOWERS

I have loved flowers that fade,
Within whose magic tents
Rich hues have marriage made
With sweet unmemoried scents:
A honeymoon delight,—
A joy of love at sight,
That ages in an hour:—
My song be like a flower!

I have loved airs, that die
Before their charm is writ
Along a liquid sky
Trembling to welcome it.
Notes, that with pulse of fire
Proclaim the spirit's desire,
Then die, and are nowhere:—
My song be like an air!

Die, song, die like a breath,
And wither as a bloom:
Fear not a flowery death,
Dread not an airy tomb!
Fly with delight, fly hence!
'Twas thine love's tender sense
To feast; now on thy bier
Beauty shall shed a tear.

## NIMIUM FORTUNATUS

I have lain in the sun,
I have toil'd as I might,
I have thought as I would,
And now it is night.

My bed full of sleep,
My heart of content
For friends that I met
The way that I went.

I welcome fatigue
While frenzy and care
Like thin summer clouds
Go melting in air.

To dream as I may
And awake when I will
With the song of the birds
And the sun on the hill.

Or death—were it death—
To what should I wake
Who loved in my home
All life for its sake?

What good have I wrought?
I laugh to have learned
That joy cannot come
Unless it be earned;

For a happier lot
Than God giveth me
It never hath been
Nor ever shall be.

Andrew Lang, critic and essayist, was born March 31, 1844, at Selkirk, Scotland, and educated at Balliol College, Oxford. Besides his many well-known translations of Homer, Theocritus and the Greek Anthology, he has published numerous biographical works.

As a poet, his claim rests on his light verse. *Ballads and Lyrics of Old France* (1872), *Ballades in Blue China* (1880), and *Rhymes à la Mode* (1884) disclose Lang as a lesser Austin Dobson. His death occurred July 20, 1912.

As journalist, critic and historian, verse was his relaxation, Lang being particularly fond of the lightly summoned, lightly dispatched grace of the ballade and rondeau. Daintiness was the outstanding characteristic of his half-dozen books of rhyme, *Ballades in Blue China* being the best known.

Various monographs showed Lang's close study of historical details, especially those of the intrigues surrounding Mary Stuart. It is likely, however, that Lang will be remembered longest by none of his more original works, but by his excellent adaptations for children, the first of which, *The Blue Fairy Tale Book* (1889), was followed annually by other tales and romances in changing colors.

## SCYTHE SONG

Mowers, weary and brown and blithe,
What is the word, methinks, ye know,
Endless over-word that the Scythe
Sings to the blades of the grass below?
Scythes that swing in the grass and clover,
Something, still, they say as they pass;
What is the word that, over and over,
Sings the Scythe to the flowers and grass?

*Hush, ah, hush,* the Scythes are saying,
*Hush, and heed not, and fall asleep;*
*Hush,* they say to the grasses swaying;
*Hush,* they sing to the clover deep!
*Hush*—'tis the lullaby Time is singing—
*Hush, and heed not, for all things pass;*
*Hush, ah, hush!* and the Scythes are swinging
Over the clover, over the grass!

### THE ODYSSEY

As one that for a weary space has lain
  Lulled by the song of Circe and her wine
  In gardens near the pale of Proserpine,
Where that Aeaean isle forgets the main,
And only the low lutes of love complain,
  And only shadows of wan lovers pine—
  As such an one were glad to know the brine
Salt on his lips, and the large air again,—
So gladly, from the songs of modern speech
  Men turn, and see the stars, and feel the free
    Shrill wind beyond the close of heavy flowers,
    And through the music of the languid hours
They hear like Ocean on the western beach
  The surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

## EUGENE LEE-HAMILTON

Eugene (Jacob) Lee-Hamilton was born in London, January 6, 1845, and was educated partly in France and Germany, partly under tutors at home. Never in robust health, he was forced to leave Oriel College at Oxford without a degree, and, after various positions with the British Diplomatic Service abroad, had to retire from all active work. For twenty years, he was incapacitated and had to lie on his back, suffering from a nervous disease similar to that which kept Heine on his "mattress grave." He died in Italy, near Florence, on September 7, 1907.

In spite of his long illness, he was able to compose and dictate some ten volumes of verse, the earliest of which is *Poems and Transcripts* (1878). However, the work on which his reputation rests is a series of autobiographic poems, *Sonnets of the Wingless Hours* (1894), a sequence that displays his delicate skill in the classic form. In 1903, Lee-Hamilton made a selection from his own poems which appeared in "The Canterbury Poets" series with a preface by William Sharp.

### ROMAN BATHS

There were some Roman baths where we spent hours:
  Immense and lonely courts of rock like brick,
  All overgrown with verdure strong and thick,
And girding sweet wild lawns all full of flowers.

One day, beneath the turf, green with the showers
  Of all the centuries since Genseric,
  They found rich pavements hidden by Time's trick,
Adorned with tritons, dolphins, doves like ours.

So, underneath the surface of Today,
  Lies yesterday, and what we call the Past,
The only thing which never can decay.

Things bygone are the only things that last:
  The Present is mere grass, quick-mown away:
The Past is stone, and stands for ever fast.

## MICHAEL FIELD

Michael Field was the pen-name adopted by two women: an aunt, Katherine Harris Bradley, born in 1846, and her niece, Edith Emma Cooper, born in 1862. The affection between the two was unusually deep; it is evident that many of their poems were written to each other. But, during their lifetime, few discovered the secret of their disguise. Robert Browning was the first to hail Michael Field with enthusiasm, and the early work had a great vogue in the 'eighties. Reviewers hailed Field's *Callirhoë* as a work of genius; Swinburne and Meredith were lavish in praise of subsequent volumes. But—possibly due to the waning interest in classicism, possibly because of their overproductiveness—the twinned poets lost the public's interest and "the literary world," to quote Sturge Moore, "having been plunged into a disproportionate eagerness, next plunged into an equally unintelligent neglect."

Between 1887 and 1912, the two authors published more than twenty-five plays and eight volumes of poems; two other books were issued posthumously. In 1913, Edith Cooper died of cancer, a disease which she had concealed from her fellow-worker; a few months later, in 1914, the older, Katherine Bradley, died of the same illness.

The best known of Michael Field's volumes is the set of adaptations from Sappho entitled *Long Ago*. But, though the collections of their original verse suffer from unevenness and lack of condensation, a few lyrics, like the one beginning "I could wish to be dead," are poignantly direct and such an outcry as "Descent from the Cross" burns with an ecstatic fire. *The Accuser and Other*

*Plays* (1911) contains the most vivid of the dramas; *Dedicated* (1914) and *In the Name of Time* (1919) were issued after Field's death.

*A Selection from the Poems of Michael Field* with a Preface by T. Sturge Moore was published by The Poetry Bookshop in 1923. An invaluable study, *Michael Field*, the result of years of patient labor by Mary Sturgeon, appeared in 1922.

Though Michael Field's work can never be popular, it should not be neglected. Even the greater figures of the period cannot dwarf what is large and essentially noble in the best of the monologues and dramas. What militates against them is a preoccupied seriousness and a mood prevailingly overcast. This work is somber, for Michael Field was a tragic rather than a lyric poet, obsessed with the struggle of man against the apathy of nature. A carefully selected edition in one volume is needed in America to call attention to this poet. It is lamentable that a body of work so high in purpose, so rare in attainment remains practically unknown.

### THE TRAGIC MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

I could wish to be dead!
Too quick with life were the tears I shed,
Too sweet for tears is the life I led;
And, ah, too lonesome my marriage-bed!
I could wish to be dead.

I could wish to be dead,
For just a word that rings in my head;
Too dear, too dear are the words he said,
They must never be rememberèd.
I could wish to be dead.

I could wish to be dead:
The wish to be loved is all mis-read,
And to love, one learns when one is wed,
Is to suffer bitter shame; instead
I could wish to be dead.

## AFTER SOUFRIÈRE[1]

It is not grief or pain;
But like the even dropping of the rain,
That thou art gone.
It is not like a grave
To weep upon;
But like the rise and falling of a wave
When the vessel's gone.
It is like the sudden void
When the city is destroyed,
Where the sun shone:
There is neither grief nor pain,
But the wide waste come again.

## TOO LATE

"O Virgins, very lovely in your troop,
O Virgins, very lovely, very white,
How is it that your lilies droop?
How is it that the lamps you bear are not alight?

"Why are you bending downward from the hill?
Bright is it on the hill as for a feast."
Trembling they sped as to fulfill
Some grievous prophecy; nor heeded me the least.

Downward they passed. . . . Oh, they were very fair,
But stricken as the frosted leaves to doom!
Their eyes I saw. . . . Bright with despair
Their eyes, and very lamps to light them to their doom.

Full were their looks of love and sorrowing
As they passed by me, shaking out a spell
Of sighs, of balms. And is it such a thing
Can be, that they were hurrying to Hell?

[1] T. Sturge Moore says: "I believe this title to refer to a volcanic cataclysm in which the town of Soufrière in Guadeloupe was destroyed, and which had occurred just before the poem was written."

## METE ME OUT MY LONELINESS

Come, mete me out my loneliness, O wind,
For I would know
How far the living who must stay behind
Are from the dead who go.

Eternal Passer-by, I feel there is
In thee a stir,
A strength to span the yawning distances
From her gravestone to her.

## MORE GOLD THAN GOLD

(*After Sappho*)

Yea, gold is son of Zeus: no rust
  Its timeless light can stain;
The worm that brings man's flesh to dust
  Assaults its strength in vain:
More gold than gold the love I sing,
A hard, inviolable thing.

Men say the passions should grow old
  With waning years; my heart
Is incorruptible as gold,
  'Tis my immortal part;
Nor is there any god can lay
On love the finger of decay.

## DESCENT FROM THE CROSS[1]

Come down from the Cross, my soul, and save thyself—come
  down!
Thou wilt be free as wind. None meeting thee will know
How thou wert hanging stark, my soul, outside the town,
Thou wilt fare to and fro;

[1] This poem is from *Poems of Adoration* (1912), which was entirely written (with the exception of a few pages) by Edith Cooper after her conversion.

Thy feet in grass will smell of faithful thyme; thy head. . . .
Think of the thorns, my soul—how thou wilt cast them off,
With shudder at the bleeding clench they hold!
But on their wounds thou wilt a balsam spread,
And over that a verdurous circle rolled
With gathered violets, sweet bright violets, sweet
As incense of the thyme on thy free feet;
A wreath thou wilt not give away, nor wilt thou doff.

Come down from the Cross, my soul, and save thyself; yea, move
As scudding swans pass lithely on a seaward stream!
Thou wilt have everything; thou wert made great to love;
Thou wilt have ease for every dream;
No nails with fang will hold thy purpose to one aim;
There will be arbors round about thee, not one trunk
Against thy shoulders pressed and burning them with hate,
Yea, burning with intolerable flame.
O lips, such noxious vinegar have drunk,
There are, through valley-woods and mountain glades,
Rivers where thirst in naked prowess wades;
And there are wells in solitude whose chill no hour abates!

Come down from the Cross, my soul, and save thyself! A sign
Thou wilt become to many as a shooting star.
They will believe thou art ethereal, divine,
When thou art where they are;
They will believe in thee and give thee feasts and praise.
They will believe thy power when thou hast loosed thy nails;
For power to them is fetterless and grand:
For destiny to them, along their ways,
Is one whose earthly Kingdom never fails.
Thou wilt be as a prophet or a king
In thy tremendous term of flourishing—
And thy hot royalty with acclamations fanned.

Come down from the Cross, my soul, and save thyself! . . . Beware!
Art thou not crucified with God, who is thy breath?
Wilt thou not hang as He while mockers laugh and stare?
Wilt thou not die His death?

Wilt thou not stay as He with nails and thorns and thirst?
Wilt thou not choose to conquer faith in His lone style?
Wilt thou not be with Him and hold thee still?
Voices have cried to him, *Come Down!* Accursed
And vain those voices, striving to beguile!
How heedless, solemn-gray in powerful mass,
Christ droops among the echoes as they pass!
O soul, remain with Him, with Him thy doom fulfill!

## EDMUND GOSSE

Edmund (William) Gosse was born in London, 1849, son of Philip Henry Gosse, the naturalist. By his seventieth birthday Gosse was the author of some fifty volumes and the translator and editor of some thirty more. He died in 1928.

From 1867, when he became assistant librarian at the British Museum, Gosse spent his life among letters, creatively and critically. As a translator, his skill was soon apparent, his work in Scandinavian literature being especially authoritative. As a journalist, he was courted, flattered and feared, but his integrity was unquestioned.

*Madrigals* (1870), *On Viol and Flute* (1873), *Firdusi in Exile* (1886), *In Russet and Silver* (1894) and *Collected Poems* (1911) show talent rather than genius. The lyrics are easy to read and easy to remember though they are without a shock, scarcely a tremor of originality. But the music of "Lying in the Grass" (a favorite of the period) and other songs is as simple as it is sincere.

### WITH A COPY OF HERRICK

Fresh with all airs of woodland brooks
  And scents of showers,
Take to your haunt of holy books
  This saint of flowers.

When meadows burn with budding May,
  And heaven is blue,
Before his shrine our prayers we say—
  Saint Robin true.

Love crowned with thorns is on his staff,
  Thorns of sweet briar;
His benediction is a laugh,
  Birds are his choir.

His sacred robe of white and red
Unction distills;
He hath a nimbus round his head
Of daffodils.

## WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

William Ernest Henley was born August 23, 1849, at Gloucester, and was educated at the Grammar School of Gloucester. From childhood he was afflicted with a tuberculous disease which finally necessitated the amputation of a foot. His *Hospital Verses*, those vivid precursors of free verse, were a record of the time when he was at the infirmary at Edinburgh; they are sharp with the sights, sensations, even the actual smells, of the sick-room. In spite (or, more probably, because) of his continued poor health, Henley never ceased to worship strength and energy; courage and a triumphant belief in a harsh world shine out of the athletic *London Voluntaries* (1892) and the lightest lyrics in *Hawthorne and Lavender* (1901).

His buoyancy, rousing at first, becomes wearing; it is a little too insistent, a little shrill. When Henley ceased to overrate animal energy he was no less himself and a better poet. When not banging drums and flashing swords, he could distill the essence of a lyric, turn a triolet or ballade with the most expert practitioner of the French forms, paint impressionistic side-lights of intimate unturbulent London, and, in such pieces as "Madame Life," combine grim humor and gay *bizarrerie*.

The mixture of lightness and lustiness dates from his early youth. An infectious idiom, it flowered under his first influence which was that of his schoolmaster, T. E. Brown (see page 48) and remained to the end.

The bulk of Henley's poetry is not great in volume. He has himself explained the small quantity of his work in a Preface to his *Poems*, first published in 1888. "A principal reason," he says, "is that, after spending the better part of my life in the pursuit of poetry, I found myself (about 1877) so utterly unmarketable that I had to own myself beaten in art, and to indict myself to journalism for the next ten years." Later on, he began to write again—"old dusty sheaves were dragged to light; the work of selection and correction was begun; I burned much; I found that, after all, the lyrical instinct had slept—not died."

As editor he was fearless, prejudiced, violent in preferences and antipathies, and always sincere. His unflinching candor won over even those who completely disagreed with him. His friendships

were many, one of the closest being Robert Louis Stevenson, with whom he wrote three plays published in 1892. Though continually in conflict, he remained belligerent until 1894; in that year the death of his six-year-old daughter broke the heart of one whose head had been "bloody but unbowed."

In 1901 he published *Hawthorne and Lavender*, releasing a far finer though smaller music than he had ever uttered. His unrhymed rhythms, reminiscent of Heine's *North Sea* cycles, anticipated in color and accent the subsequent vogue of *vers libre*. Although he was not one of the great poets of his period, his period, as well as ours, would be incomplete without him.

After a brilliant and varied career (see Preface), devoted mostly to journalism, Henley died in 1903.

## INVICTUS

Out of the night that covers me,
  Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
  For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
  I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
  My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
  Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
  Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
  How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
  I am the captain of my soul.

## THE BLACKBIRD

The nightingale has a lyre of gold,
  The lark's is a clarion call,
And the blackbird plays but a boxwood flute,
  But I love him best of all.

For his song is all of the joy of life,
And we in the mad, spring weather,
We two have listened till he sang
Our hearts and lips together.

## A BOWL OF ROSES

It was a bowl of roses:
There in the light they lay,
Languishing, glorying, glowing
Their life away.

And the soul of them rose like a presence,
Into me crept and grew,
And filled me with something—some one—
O, was it you?

## BEFORE

Behold me waiting—waiting for the knife.
A little while, and at a leap I storm
The thick sweet mystery of chloroform,
The drunken dark, the little death-in-life.
The gods are good to me: I have no wife,
No innocent child, to think of as I near
The fateful minute; nothing all-too dear
Unmans me for my bout of passive strife.
Yet I am tremulous and a trifle sick,
And, face to face with chance, I shrink a little:
My hopes are strong, my will is something weak.
Here comes the basket? Thank you. I am ready
But, gentlemen my porters, life is brittle:
You carry Caesar and his fortunes—Steady!

## BALLADE

### MADE IN THE HOT WEATHER

Fountains that frisk and sprinkle
The moss they overspill;
Pools that the breezes crinkle;
The wheel beside the mill,
With its wet, weedy frill;

Wind-shadows in the wheat;
A water-cart in the street;
The fringe of foam that girds
An islet's ferneries;
A green sky's minor thirds—
To live, I think of these!

Of ice and glass the tinkle,
Pellucid, silver-shrill;
Peaches without a wrinkle;
Cherries and snow at will,
From china bowls that fill
The senses with a sweet
Incuriousness of heat;
A melon's dripping sherds;
Cream-clotted strawberries;
Dusk dairies set with curds—
To live, I think of these!

Vale-lily and periwinkle;
Wet stone-crop on the sill;
The look of leaves a-twinkle
With windlets clear and still;
The feel of a forest rill
That wimples fresh and fleet
About one's naked feet;
The muzzles of drinking herds;
Lush flags and bulrushes;
The chirp of rain-bound birds—
To live, I think of these!

*Envoy*

Dark aisles, new packs of cards,
Mermaidens' tails, cool swards,
Dawn dews and starlit seas,
White marbles, whiter words—
To live, I think of these!

## WE'LL GO NO MORE A-ROVING

We'll go no more a-roving by the light of the moon.
November glooms are barren beside the dusk of June.
The summer flowers are faded, the summer thoughts are sere.
We'll go no more a-roving, lest worse befall, my dear.

We'll go no more a-roving by the light of the moon.
The song we sang rings hollow, and heavy runs the tune.
Glad ways and words remembered would shame the wretched year.
We'll go no more a-roving, nor dream we did, my dear.

We'll go no more a-roving by the light of the moon.
If yet we walk together, we need not shun the noon.
No sweet thing left to savor, no sad thing left to fear,
We'll go no more a-roving, but weep at home, my dear.

## MADAM LIFE

Madam Life's a piece in bloom
  Death goes dogging everywhere:
She's the tenant of the room,
  He's the ruffian on the stair.

You shall see her as a friend,
  You shall bilk him once and twice;
But he'll trap you in the end,
  And he'll stick you for her price.

With his kneebones at your chest,
  And his knuckles in your throat,
You would reason—plead—protest!
  Clutching at her petticoat;

But she's heard it all before,
  Well she knows you've had your fun,
Gingerly she gains the door,
  And your little job is done.

## OUT OF TUNE

The spring, my dear,
Is no longer spring.
Does the blackbird sing
What he sang last year?
Are the skies the old
Immemorial blue?
Or am I, or are you,
Grown cold?

Though life be change,
It is hard to bear
When the old sweet air
Sounds forced and strange.
To be out of tune,
Plain You and I . . .
It were better to die,
And soon!

## FALMOUTH[1]

O, Falmouth is a fine town with ships in the bay,
And I wish from my heart it's there I was today;
I wish from my heart I was far away from here,
Sitting in my parlor and talking to my dear.
For it's home, dearie, home—it's home I want to be.
Our topsails are hoisted, and we'll away to sea.
O, the oak and the ash and the bonnie birken tree
They're all growing green in the old countrie.

In Baltimore a-walking a lady I did meet
With her babe on her arm, as she came down the street;
And I thought how I sailed, and the cradle standing ready
For the pretty little babe that has never seen its daddie.
And it's home, dearie, home . . .

O, if it be a lass, she shall wear a golden ring;
And if it be a lad, he shall fight for his king:
With his dirk and his hat and his little jacket blue
He shall walk the quarter-deck as his daddie used to do.
And it's home, dearie, home . . .

[1] The burden and the third stanza are adapted from an old song.

O, there's a wind a-blowing, a-blowing from the west,
And that of all the winds is the one I like the best,
For it blows at our backs, and it shakes our pennon free,
And it soon will blow us home to the old countrie.
For it's home, dearie, home—it's home I want to be.
Our topsails are hoisted, and we'll away to sea.
O, the oak and the ash and the bonnie birken tree
They're all growing green in the old countrie.

## ENGLAND, MY ENGLAND

What have I done for you,
England, my England?
What is there that I would not do,
England, my own?
With your glorious eyes austere,
As the Lord were walking near,
Whispering terrible things and dear
As the Song on your bugles blown,
England—
Round the world on your bugles blown!

Where shall the watchful Sun,
England, my England,
Match the master-work you've done,
England, my own?
When shall he rejoice again
Such a breed of mighty men
As come forward, one to ten,
To the Song on your bugles blown,
England—
Down the years on your bugles blown?

Ever the faith endures,
England, my England:—
'Take and break us: we are yours,
'England, my own!
'Life is good, and joy runs high
'Between English earth and sky:
'Death is death; but we shall die
'To the Song on your bugles blown,
'England—
'To the stars on your bugles blown!'

They call you proud and hard,
  England, my England:
You with worlds to watch and ward,
  England, my own!
You whose mailed hand keeps the keys
Of such teeming destinies
You could know nor dread nor ease
  Were the Song on your bugles blown,
    England,
  Round the Pit on your bugles blown!

Mother of Ships whose might,
  England, my England,
Is the fierce old Sea's delight,
  England, my own,
Chosen daughter of the Lord,
Spouse-in-Chief of the ancient sword,
There's the menace of the Word
  In the Song on your bugles blown,
    England—
  Out of heaven on your bugles blown!

## MARGARITAE SORORI

A late lark twitters from the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, gray city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!
My task accomplished and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,
Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death.

## ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Robert Louis Stevenson was born at Edinburgh in 1850 and attended the university there. From infancy he was afflicted with illness, nearly dying of gastric fever at the age of eight, a sickness which left him constitutionally weak. The rest of his life was a struggle between his work and a search for health in Switzerland, America, and the South Seas. He was at first trained to be a lighthouse engineer, following the profession of his family. However, he studied law instead; was admitted to the bar in 1875; and abandoned law for literature a few years later. After wandering several years about Europe, he recorded his peregrinations in *An Inland Voyage* (1878) and *Travels with a Donkey* (1879). Although he had written much before his thirtieth year, it was not until the publication of *Treasure Island* (1883) that he became popular. In 1885 he published, with some misgiving, *A Child's Garden of Verses;* and again won public favor a year later with that weird *tour de force, The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.*

In 1887, after a prolonged breakdown, he left England never to return. In rapid succession he tried the Adirondacks, New Jersey, California, and, in 1888 sailed, as Sidney Colvin said, "on what was only intended to be an excursion, but turned into a voluntary exile, prolonged until the hour of his death." He lived in Honolulu, Australia, and finally Samoa, where, after a long fight, he succumbed to consumption in 1894.

Though primarily a novelist, Stevenson has left one book of poetry which is equally at home in the nursery and the library: *A Child's Garden of Verses* is second only to Mother Goose's own collection in its simplicity and universal appeal. With the exception of these favorite verses and a posthumous *New Poems* (1918), *Underwoods* (1887) and *Ballads* (1890) comprise his entire poetic output. As a genial essayist, he is usually ranked with Charles Lamb. As a romancer, his fame rests securely on *Kidnapped,* the

unfinished masterpiece, *Weir of Hermiston,* and that eternal classic of youth, *Treasure Island.*

Stevenson's writing is inseparable from his charm and the personal appeal of his life-story. He is persuasive, not profound, a trifle too concerned with his craft, but never dull and finally winning.

### SUMMER SUN

Great is the sun, and wide he goes
Through empty heaven without repose;
And in the blue and glowing days
More thick than rain he showers his rays.

Though closer still the blinds we pull
To keep the shady parlor cool,
Yet he will find a chink or two
To slip his golden fingers through.

The dusty attic, spider-clad,
He, through the keyhole, maketh glad;
And through the broken edge of tiles
Into the laddered hay-loft smiles.

Meantime his golden face around
He bares to all the garden ground,
And sheds a warm and glittering look
Among the ivy's inmost nook.

Above the hills, along the blue,
Round the bright air with footing true,
To please the child, to paint the rose,
The gardener of the World, he goes.

### WINTER TIME

Late lies the wintry sun a-bed,
A frosty, fiery sleepy-head;
Blinks but an hour or two; and then,
A blood-red orange, sets again.

Before the stars have left the skies.
At morning in the dark I rise;
And, shivering in my nakedness,
By the cold candle, bathe and dress.

Close by the jolly fire I sit
To warm my frozen bones a bit;
Or, with a reindeer-sled, explore
The colder countries round the door.

When to go out, my nurse doth wrap
Me in my comforter and cap;
The cold wind burns my face, and blows
Its frosty pepper up my nose.

Black are my steps on silver sod;
Thick blows my frosty breath abroad;
And tree and house, and hill and lake,
Are frosted like a wedding-cake.

## THE CELESTIAL SURGEON

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain:—
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake;
Or, Lord, if still too obdurate I,
Choose thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in!

## ROMANCE

I will make you brooches and toys for your delight
Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night.
I will make a palace fit for you and me,
Of green days in forests and blue days at sea.

I will make my kitchen, and you shall keep your room,
Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom,
And you shall wash your linen and keep your body white
In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.

And this shall be for music when no one else is near,
The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear!
That only I remember, that only you admire,
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire

### REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky
  Dig the grave and let me lie:
Glad did I live and gladly die,
  And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you 'grave for me:
  *Here he lies where he long'd to be;*
*Home is the sailor, home from the sea,*
  *And the hunter home from the hill.*

### GO, LITTLE BOOK

Go, little book, and wish to all
Flowers in the garden, meat in the hall,
A bin of wine, a spice of wit,
A house with lawns enclosing it,
A living river by the door,
A nightingale in the sycamore.

## ALICE MEYNELL

Alice (Christiana Thompson) Meynell was born in 1850, educated at home and spent a great part of her early life in Italy. Later, she married Wilfred Meynell, friend, editor and literary executor of Francis Thompson. For eighteen years she contributed to the *Weekly Register* of which her husband was editor; for twelve years was co-editor with him on *Merrie England;* wrote countless essays, columns for other periodicals, issued several volumes of poetry, made innumerable contacts—not the least of

which was the sponsorship of Francis Thompson which saved him from ruin—all with a huge family growing up about her. There were seven Meynell children, among them being Francis, typographer and poet (see page 656), Viola, the novelist (see page 637), Monica, the critical, and Everard, author of *The Life of Francis Thompson.* As described in the authorized Memoir *Alice Meynell* (1929) by her daughter, Viola, the children, aping their elders, conceived editing as a species of indoor sport and made up papers of their own. In one of these, the youngsters, attempting to answer Mrs. Meynell's critics, unconsciously appraised her:

> "Her thought is a thought which very few writers got. It is mystical but excucite. She is a little obscure to readers who are not up in literature sufficiently to understand mystical touches. . . . Hers is a very docile temperament and thoroughly sympathetic. When she is singing a sympathetic song you can tell that she must have some excellent powers in her head."

The child Monica, touched with the family passion for salvation and trying to save her mother from literature, put the case against "ecstasy" in these delightful sentences:

> "Dear Mother,—I hope you will in time give up your absurd thoughts about litreture. It makes my mind quite feverish when I think of the exhaltation your undergoing. I'm getting quite frightened about calling you 'dear Mother' because you will begin to take it quite seriously. Just because Mr. Henley and those sort of unsencere men say you write well simply because they know if they don't flatter you they'll never get anything for their paper. Now mother take my advise and don't be quite so estatic, you'll get on just as well in the world and much better because you'll be respected. Now just see. MONNIE."

Whatever form Alice Meynell chose, her work was always a reflection of her spirit. She scorned sentimentality, "the facile literary opportunity," despised slovenliness, "the fashion of an animated strut of style," and kept herself aloof from them. Her later years were spent collecting her poems, revising her early prose and publishing the best of it in *Essays.* She died in 1923.

*Preludes* was published in 1876. Since then, various collections of her poems and essays have appeared at irregular intervals, and, in 1923, Charles Scribner's Sons published *The Poems of Alice Meynell* (Complete Edition). From the earliest restrained verses to the later more ornate conceits, one strain is dominant: the music of religious emotion. It is, obviously, emotion controlled, almost intellectualized. Yet the poetry is never dull. The reader is always

aware of a nature disciplined, but which, for all its self-imposed strictures, is rich in feeling, exquisite in communication.

"Christ in the Universe," "To a Daisy," and "A Thrush Before Dawn," show a literary as well as spiritual kinship with Francis Thompson; but where Thompson is lavish to the point of gaudiness, Mrs. Meynell's fastidiousness dictates a fine economy.

## TO A DAISY[1]

Slight as thou art, thou art enough to hide,
  Like all created things, secrets from me,
  And stand a barrier to eternity.
And I, how can I praise thee well and wide
From where I dwell—upon the hither side?
  Thou little veil for so great mystery,
  When shall I penetrate all things and thee,
And then look back? For this I must abide,
Till thou shalt grow and fold and be unfurled
Literally between me and the world.
  Then I shall drink from in beneath a spring,
And from a poet's side shall read his book.
O daisy mine, what will it be to look
  From God's side even on such a simple thing?

## THE SHEPHERDESS

She walks—the lady of my delight—
  A shepherdess of sheep.
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white;
  She guards them from the steep;
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
  And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright
  Dark valleys safe and deep.
Into that tender breast at night,
  The chastest stars may peep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
  A shepherdess of sheep.

[1] Compare the poem on the same theme on page 673.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
  Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right;
  She has her soul to keep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
  A shepherdess of sheep.

## THE WIND IS BLIND

"Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill, with slaves."
—*Milton's Samson.*

The wind is blind.
The earth sees sun and moon; the height
Is watch-tower to the dawn; the plain
Shines to the summer; visible light
Is scattered in the drops of rain.

The wind is blind.
The flashing billows are aware;
With open eyes the cities see;
Light leaves the ether, everywhere
Known to the homing bird and bee.

The wind is blind,
Is blind alone. How has he hurled
His ignorant lash, his sinless dart,
His eyeless rush upon the world,
Unseeing, to break his unknown heart!

The wind is blind.
And the sail traps him, and the mill
Captures him; and he cannot save
His swiftness and his desperate will
From those blind uses of the slave.

## NOVEMBER BLUE

The golden tint of the electric lights seems to give a complementary color to the air in the early evening.—*Essay on London.*

O heavenly color, London town
  Has blurred it from her skies;
And, hooded in an earthly brown,
  Unheaven'd the city lies.

No longer, standard-like, this hue
  Above the broad road flies;
Nor does the narrow street the blue
  Wear, slender pennon-wise.

But when the gold and silver lamps
  Color the London dew,
And, misted by the winter damps,
  The shops shine bright, anew—
Blue comes to earth, it walks the street,
  It dyes the wide air through;
A mimic sky about their feet
  The throng go crowned with blue.

## THE OCTOBER REDBREAST

Autumn is weary, halt, and old;
  Ah, but she owns the song of joy!
Her colors fade, her woods are cold.
  Her singing-bird's a boy, a boy.

In lovely Spring the birds were bent
  On nests, on use, on love, forsooth!
Grown-up were they. This boy's content,
  For his is liberty, his is youth.

The musical stripling sings for play
  Taking no thought, and virgin-glad.
For duty sang those mates in May.
  This singing-bird's a lad, a lad.

## A THRUSH BEFORE DAWN

A voice peals in this end of night
  A phrase of notes resembling stars,
Single and spiritual notes of light.
  What call they at my window-bars?
    The South, the past, the day to be,
    An ancient infelicity.

Darkling, deliberate, what sings
  This wonderful one, alone, at peace?
What wilder things than song, what things
  Sweeter than youth, clearer than Greece,
    Dearer than Italy, untold
    Delight, and freshness centuries old?

And first first-loves, a multitude,
  The exaltation of their pain;
Ancestral childhood long renewed;
  And midnights of invisible rain;
    And gardens, gardens, night and day,
    Gardens and childhood all the way.

What Middle Ages passionate,
  O passionless voice! What distant bells
Lodged in the hills, what palace state
  Illyrian! For it speaks, it tells,
    Without desire, without dismay
    Some morrow and some yesterday.

All-natural things! But more— Whence came
  This yet remoter mystery?
How do these starry notes proclaim
  A graver still divinity?
    This hope, this sanctity of fear?
    *O innocent throat! O human ear!*

## RENOUNCEMENT

I must not think of thee; and, tired yet strong,
  I shun the thought that lurks in all delight—
  The thought of thee—and in the blue Heaven's height,
And in the sweetest passage of a song.

O just beyond the fairest thoughts that throng
  This breast, the thought of thee waits hidden yet bright;
  But it must never, never come in sight;
I must stop short of thee the whole day long.

But when sleep comes to close each difficult day,
When night gives pause to the long watch I keep,
And all my bonds I needs must loose apart,

Must doff my will as raiment laid away,
With the first dream that comes with the first sleep
I run, I run, I am gathered to thy heart.

## CHRIST IN THE UNIVERSE

With this ambiguous earth
His dealings have been told us. These abide:
The signal to a maid, the human birth,
The lesson, and the young Man crucified.

But not a star of all
The innumerable hosts of stars has heard
How He administered this terrestrial ball.
Our race have kept their Lord's entrusted Word.

Of His earth-visiting feet
None knows the secret, cherished, perilous,
The terrible, shamefast, frightened, whispered, sweet,
Heart-shattering secret of His way with us.

No planet knows of this.
Our wayside planet, carrying land and wave,
Love and life multiplied, and pain and bliss,
Bears, as chief treasure, one forsaken grave.

Nor, in our little day,
May His devices with the heavens be guessed;
His pilgrimage to thread the Milky Way,
Or His bestowals there, be manifest.

But, in the eternities,
Doubtless we shall compare together, hear
A million alien Gospels, in what guise
He trod the Pleiades, the Lyre, the Bear.

O be prepared, my soul!
To read the inconceivable, to scan
The million forms of God those stars unroll
When, in our turn, we show to them a Man.

## WILLIAM CANTON

William Canton was born in 1852, in the Island of Chusan, off the coast of China. His childhood was spent in Jamaica and his education received in France, at Douai. Besides publishing a dozen volumes of prose sketches and histories, he did journalist's work on the *Glasgow Herald* and later on *The Contemporary Review*. He published two volumes of poetry, *The Lost Epic* (1887) and *The Comrades* (1902). In 1873 Huxley praised his "Through the Ages" as the first attempt to use the material of science for poetry. His verses were out of print for twenty years until 1927 when a small selection was included in one of the Sixpenny Pamphlets of the *Augustan Poets* series.

### NATURE'S MAGIC

Give her the wreckage of strife—
Tumulus, tumbled tower,
Each clod and each stone she'll make her own
With the grass and innocent flower.

Give her the Candlemas snow,
Smiling she'll take the gift,
And out of the flake a snowdrop make,
And a lambkin out of the drift.

## F. W. BOURDILLON

Francis William Bourdillon was born in 1852 and educated at Worcester College, Oxford. Although he wrote half a dozen volumes of verse, the only things of his which seem destined to survive are an excellent translation of *Aucassin and Nicolette* (published in 1879) and the tiny love-song without which no anthology of the period is complete. Such volumes of his as *A Lost God* (1891) and *Through the Gateway* (1902) contain writing which is neither better nor worse than the average of its kind.

Bourdillon died in the summer of 1921.

### THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

## FIONA MACLEOD

(*William Sharp*)

William Sharp was born at Garthland Place, Renfrewshire, Scotland, in 1856. He spent his youth in the Scottish highlands, attended Glasgow University, went to Australia because of poor health, and returned to London in 1879. After no little amount of hack-work, he wrote several volumes of biography and criticism, published a book of plays greatly influenced by Maeterlinck (*Vistas*) and became editor of "The Canterbury Poets" series.

His feminine *alter ego*, Fiona Macleod, was a far different personality. Sharp actually believed himself possessed of another spirit. Under the spell of this second self, he wrote several volumes of Celtic tales, beautiful tragic romances and no little unusual poetry. Of the prose stories written by Fiona Macleod, the most barbaric and vivid are those collected in *The Sin-Eater and Other Tales;* the longer *Pharais, A Romance of the Isles,* is scarcely less fascinating.

In the ten years, 1882-1891, William Sharp published four volumes of rather undistinguished and sometimes "free" verse. In 1896, *From the Hills of Dream* appeared over the signature of Fiona Macleod; *The Hour of Beauty,* a rather more distinctive collection, followed shortly. Both poetry and prose were always the result of two sharply differentiated moods constantly fluctuating; the emotional mood was that of Fiona Macleod, the intellectual and, it must be admitted, the more arresting contribution was that of William Sharp.

He died in 1905.

## THE VALLEY OF SILENCE

In the secret Valley of Silence
No breath doth fall;
No wind stirs in the branches;
No bird doth call:
As on a white wall
A breathless lizard is still,
So silence lies on the valley,
Breathlessly still.

In the dusk-grown heart of the valley
An altar rises white:
No rapt priest bends in awe
Before its silent light:
But sometimes a flight
Of breathless words of prayer
White-wing'd enclose the altar,
Eddies of prayer.

## THE VISION

In a fair place
Of whin and grass,
I heard feet pass
Where no one was.

I saw a face
Bloom like a flower—
Nay, as the rainbow-shower
Of a tempestuous hour.

It was not man, or woman:
It was not human:
But, beautiful and wild,
Terribly undefiled,
I knew an unborn child.

### THE VALLEY OF WHITE POPPIES

Between the gray pastures and the dark wood
A valley of white poppies is lit by the low moon
It is the grave of dreams, a holy rood.

It is quiet there: no wind doth ever fall.
Long, long ago a wind sang once a heart-sweet rune.
Now the white poppies grow, silent and tall.

A white bird floats there like a drifting leaf:
It feeds upon faint sweet hopes and perishing dreams
And the still breath of unremembering grief.

And as a silent leaf the white bird passes,
Winnowing the dusk by dim forgetful streams.
I am alone now among the silent grasses.

## MARGARET L. WOODS

Margaret Louisa (Bradley) Woods was born at Rugby in 1856. Her father was the Dean of Westminster and she was educated at home. She married the late Rev. H. G. Woods, President of Trinity College, Oxford, and it is not strange that her work is filled with classic influences, surrounded as she was from her infancy with the flower of academic life.

However, in her dramas she transcended herself and her backgrounds; her numerous novels, though never great, are not without distinction. Her first volume, *Lyrics*, was privately printed in 1888; *Aeromancy* (1896) and *Songs* (1896) are her chief later works. A collected edition of her poems was published in 1914.

### TO THE FORGOTTEN DEAD

To the forgotten dead,
Come, let us drink in silence ere we part.
To every fervent yet resolvèd heart
That brought its tameless passion and its tears,
Renunciation and laborious years,
To lay the deep foundations of our race,
To rear its stately fabric overhead
And light its pinnacles with golden grace.
To the unhonored dead.

To the forgotten dead,
Whose dauntless hands were stretched to grasp the rein
Of Fate and hurl into the void again
Her thunder-hoofèd horses, rushing blind
Earthward along the courses of the wind.
Among the stars, along the wind in vain
Their souls were scattered and their blood was shed,
And nothing, nothing of them doth remain.
To the thrice-perished dead.

## OSCAR WILDE

Oscar (Fingall O'Flahertie) Wilde was born at Dublin, Ireland, October 16, 1856, and even as an undergraduate at Oxford was marked for a brilliant career. When he was scarcely twenty-one years of age, he won the Newdigate Prize with his poem *Ravenna.*

Devoting himself almost entirely to prose, he speedily became known as a writer of brilliant epigrammatic essays and even more brilliant paradoxical plays, such as *An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest.* Wilde's aphorisms and flippancies were quoted everywhere; his fame as a wit was only surpassed by his notoriety as an esthete. (See Preface.)

Most of his poems in prose (such as *The Happy Prince, The Birthday of the Infanta* and *The Fisherman and His Soul*) are more imaginative and richly colored than his rococo verse which suffers from deliberate decadence. But in one long poem, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898), he sounded his simplest and most enduring note. Prison was, in some ways, a regeneration for Wilde. It not only produced *The Ballad of Reading Gaol,* but made possible his finest piece of writing, *De Profundis,* only a small part of which has been published. *Salomé,* which has made the author's name a household word, was originally written in French in 1892 and later translated into English by Lord Alfred Douglas, accompanied by the famous illustrations by Aubrey Beardsley. More recently, this heated drama, based on the story of Herod and Herodias, was made into an opera by Richard Strauss.

Wilde's society plays, flashing and cynical, were the forerunners of Bernard Shaw's audacious and far more searching ironies. One sees the origin of a whole school of drama in such epigrams as "The history of woman is the history of the worst form of tyranny the world has ever known: the tyranny of the weak over the strong. It is the only tyranny that lasts." Or "There is only one

thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about."

Wilde's flair for publicity, avowed in the last quotation, was gratified to the full. No man of his time was more talked about. The end of the Esthetic Movement came coincidentally—and ironically—with the trial of Oscar Wilde and his indictment for a social crime. His predilection for extremes caused his artistic ruin: in youth he was ultra-Keatsian; in early manhood, ultra-Rossettian; in maturity, ultra-Wilde—and he pushed preciosity to the limits of the absurd. He believed in nothing, not even himself, except for the passing effect; he was essentially the "pierrot of the minute"—a pierrot whose shifting passions and impertinences convinced no one. Even his Pierroticism was a pose.

"Impression du Matin" and "Symphony in Yellow" are among the poems which suggest a verbal Whistler (with whom Wilde waged many an epigrammatic battle), and "Hélas" is an unusually honest fragment of self-analysis.

Wilde borrowed from Swinburne no little of his spirit and as much of his technique as he could master. But Swinburne's rebelliousness, though vague and general, was sincere; Wilde, the antithesis of a rebel by instinct, was a social snob who clung to his insurgence for the entrée it won him in properly breathless gatherings. His success was without dignity, his failure without pathos.

Wilde died at Paris, November 30, 1900, his body being buried in the Cemetery of Bagneux. On July 20, 1909, it was transferred to the great Cemetery of Père Lachaise, where a monument was erected to his memory.

The first of many collected editions of his *Poems* (notably the excellent Mosher volume) appeared a few years after his death.

### REQUIESCAT

Tread lightly, she is near
Under the snow,
Speak gently, she can hear
The daisies grow.

All her bright golden hair
Tarnished with rust,
She that was young and fair
Fallen to dust.

Lily-like, white as snow,
She hardly knew
She was a woman, so
Sweetly she grew.

Coffin-board, heavy stone,
Lie on her breast;
I vex my heart alone,
She is at rest.

Peace, peace; she cannot hear
Lyre or sonnet;
All my life's buried here.
Heap earth upon it.

## IMPRESSION DU MATIN

The Thames nocturne of blue and gold
Changed to a harmony in gray;
A barge with ocher-colored hay
Dropt from the wharf: and chill and cold

The yellow fog came creeping down
The bridges, till the houses' walls
Seemed changed to shadows, and St. Paul's
Loomed like a bubble o'er the town.

Then suddenly arose the clang
Of waking life; the streets were stirred
With country wagons; and a bird
Flew to the glistening roofs and sang.

But one pale woman all alone,
The daylight kissing her wan hair,
Loitered beneath the gas lamps' flare,
With lips of flame and heart of stone.

## HÉLAS

To drift with every passion till my soul
Is a stringed lute on which all winds can play,
Is it for this that I have given away
Mine ancient wisdom, and austere control?

Methinks my life is a twice-written scroll
Scrawled over on some boyish holiday
With idle songs for pipe and virelay,
Which do but mar the secret of the whole.
Surely there was a time I might have trod
The sunlit heights, and from life's dissonance
Struck one clear chord to reach the ears of God:
Is that time dead? lo! with a little rod
I did but touch the honey of romance—
And must I lose a soul's inheritance?

## MAGDALEN WALKS

The little white clouds are racing over the sky,
And the fields are strewn with the gold of the flower of March,
The daffodil breaks under foot, and the tasseled larch
Sways and swings as the thrush goes hurrying by.

A delicate odor is borne on the wings of the morning breeze,
The odor of deep wet grass, and of brown new-furrowed earth,
The birds are singing for joy of the Spring's glad birth,
Hopping from branch to branch on the rocking trees.

And all the woods are alive with the murmur and sound of Spring,
And the rose-bud breaks into pink on the climbing briar,
And the crocus-bed is a quivering moon of fire
Girdled round with the belt of an amethyst ring.

And the plane of the pine-tree is whispering some tale of love
Till it rustles with laughter and tosses its mantle of green,
And the gloom of the wych-elm's hollow is lit with the iris sheen
Of the burnished rainbow throat and the silver breast of a dove.

See! the lark starts up from his bed in the meadow there,
Breaking the gossamer threads and the nets of dew,
And flashing adown the river, a flame of blue!
The kingfisher flies like an arrow, and wounds the air.

And the sense of my life is sweet! though I know that the end
is nigh:
For the ruin and rain of winter will shortly come,
The lily will lose its gold, and the chestnut-bloom
In billows of red and white on the grass will lie.

And even the light of the sun will fade at the last,
And the leaves will fall, and the birds will hasten away,
And I will be left in the snow of a flowerless day
To think on the glories of Spring, and the joys of a youth long
past.

Yet be silent, my heart! do not count it a profitless thing
To have seen the splendor of the sun, and of grass, and of
flower!
To have lived and loved! for I hold that to love for an hour
Is better for man and woman than cycles of blossoming Spring.

## E TENEBRIS

Come down, O Christ, and help me! reach thy hand,
For I am drowning in a stormier sea
Than Simon on thy lake of Galilee:
The wine of life is spilt upon the sand,
My heart is as some famine-murdered land
Whence all good things have perished utterly,
And well I know my soul in Hell must lie
If I this night before God's throne should stand.
"He sleeps perchance, or rideth to the chase,
Like Baal, when his prophets howled that name
From morn to noon on Carmel's smitten height."
Nay, peace, I shall behold, before the night,
The feet of brass, the robe more white than flame,
The wounded hands, the weary human face.

## SYMPHONY IN YELLOW

An omnibus across the bridge
Crawls like a yellow butterfly,
And, here and there, a passer-by
Shows like a little restless midge.

Big barges full of yellow hay
  Are moved against the shadowy wharf,
  And, like a yellow silken scarf,
The thick fog hangs along the quay.

The yellow leaves begin to fade
  And flutter from the Temple elms,
  And at my feet the pale green Thames
Lies like a rod of rippled jade.

## THE HARLOT'S HOUSE

We caught the tread of dancing feet,
We loitered down the moonlit street,
And stopped beneath the harlot's house.

Inside, above the din and fray,
We heard the loud musicians play
The "Treues Liebes Herz" of Strauss.

Like strange mechanical grotesques,
Making fantastic arabesques,
The shadows raced across the blind.

We watched the ghostly dancers spin
To sound of horn and violin,
Like black leaves wheeling in the wind.

Like wire-pulled automatons,
Slim silhouetted skeletons
Went sidling through the slow quadrille.

They took each other by the hand,
And danced a stately saraband;
Their laughter echoed thin and shrill.

Sometimes a clockwork puppet pressed
A phantom lover to her breast,
Sometimes they seemed to try to sing.

Sometimes a horrible marionette
Came out, and smoked its cigarette
Upon the steps like a live thing.

Then, turning to my love, I said,
"The dead are dancing with the dead,
The dust is whirling with the dust."

But she—she heard the violin,
And left my side and entered in:
Love passed into the house of lust.

Then suddenly the tune went false,
The dancers wearied of the waltz,
The shadows ceased to wheel and whirl.

And down the long and silent street,
The dawn, with silver-sandaled feet,
Crept like a frightened girl.

## FROM "THE SPHINX"

How subtle-secret is your smile! Did you love none then? Nay, I know
Great Ammon was your bedfellow! He lay with you beside the Nile!

The river-horses in the slime trumpeted when they saw him come
Odorous with Syrian galbanum and smeared with spikenard and with thyme.

He came along the river bank like some tall galley argent-sailed,
He strode across the waters, mailed in beauty, and the waters sank.

He strode across the desert sand: he reached the valley where you lay:
He waited till the dawn of day: then touched your black breasts with his hand.

You kissed his mouth with mouth of flame: you made the hornèd god your own:
You stood behind him on his throne: you called him by his secret name.

You whispered monstrous oracles into the caverns of his ears:
With blood of goats and blood of steers you taught him monstrous miracles.

White Ammon was your bedfellow! Your chamber was the steaming Nile!
And with your curved archaic smile you watched his passion come and go.

*

With Syrian oils his brows were bright: and widespread as a tent at noon
His marble limbs made pale the moon and lent the day a larger light.

His long hair was nine cubits' span and colored like that yellow gem
Which hidden in their garment's hem the merchants bring from Kurdistan.

His face was as the must that lies upon a vat of new-made wine:
The seas could not insapphirine the perfect azure of his eyes.

His thick soft throat was white as milk and threaded with the veins of blue:
And curious pearls like frozen dew were broidered on his flowing silk.

## FROM "THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL"

He did not wear his scarlet coat,
For blood and wine are red,
And blood and wine were on his hands
When they found him with the dead,
The poor dead woman whom he loved,
And murdered in her bed.

He walked amongst the Trial Men
In a suit of shabby gray;
A cricket cap was on his head,
And his step seemed light and gay;
But I never saw a man who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw a man who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
Which prisoners call the sky,
And at every drifting cloud that went
With sails of silver by.

I walked, with other souls in pain,
Within another ring,
And was wondering if the man had done
A great or little thing,
When a voice behind me whispered low,
*"That fellow's got to swing."*

Dear Christ! the very prison walls
Suddenly seemed to reel,
And the sky above my head became
Like a casque of scorching steel;
And, though I was a soul in pain,
My pain I could not feel.

I only knew what hunted thought
Quickened his step, and why
He looked upon the garish day
With such a wistful eye;
The man had killed the thing he loved,
And so he had to die.

. . . . . .

Yet each man kills the thing he loves,
By each let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword!

Some kill their love when they are young,
And some when they are old;
Some strangle with the hands of Lust,
Some with the hands of Gold:
The kindest use a knife, because
The dead so soon grow cold.

Some love too little, some too long,
  Some sell, and others buy;
Some do the deed with many tears,
  And some without a sigh:
For each man kills the thing he loves,
  Yet each man does not die.

He does not die a death of shame
  On a day of dark disgrace,
Nor have a noose about his neck,
  Nor a cloth upon his face,
Nor drop feet foremost through the floor
  Into an empty space.

He did not wring his hands nor weep,
  Nor did he peak or pine,
But he drank the air as though it held
  Some healthful anodyne;
With open mouth he drank the sun
  As though it had been wine!

And I and all the souls in pain,
  Who tramped the other ring,
Forgot if we ourselves had done
  A great or little thing,
And watched with gaze of dull amaze
  The man who had to swing.

And strange it was to see him pass
  With a step so light and gay,
And strange it was to see him look
  So wistfully at the day,
And strange it was to think that he
  Had such a debt to pay.

. . . . . .

For oak and elm have pleasant leaves
  That in the spring-time shoot:
But grim to see is the gallows-tree,
  With its adder-bitten root,
And, green or dry, a man must die
  Before it bears its fruit!

The loftiest place is that seat of grace
For which all worldings try:
But who would stand in hempen band
Upon a scaffold high,
And through a murderer's collar take
His last look at the sky?

It is sweet to dance to violins
When Love and Life are fair:
To dance to flutes, to dance to lutes
Is delicate and rare:
But it is not sweet with nimble feet
To dance upon the air!

So with curious eyes and sick surmise
We watched him day by day,
And wondered if each one of us
Would end the self-same way,
For none can tell to what red Hell
His sightless soul may stray.

At last the dead man walked no more
Amongst the Trial Men,
And I knew that he was standing up
In the black dock's dreadful pen,
And that never would I see his face
In God's sweet world again.

Like two doomed ships that pass in storm
We had crossed each other's way:
But we made no sign, we said no word,
We had no word to say;
For we did not meet in the holy night,
But in the shameful day.

A prison wall was round us both,
Two outcast men we were:
The world had thrust us from its heart,
And God from out His care:
And the iron gin that waits for Sin
Had caught us in its snare.

John Davidson was born at Barrhead, Renfrewshire, in 1857. His *Ballads and Songs* (1895) and *New Ballads* (1897) attained a sudden but too short-lived popularity; his great promise was quenched by an apathetic public and by his own growing disillusion and despair. Neither the later *Holiday and Other Poems* (1906) nor the ambitious trilogy, *God and Mammon* (the first volume of which appeared in 1907) received anything more than frozen respect. His somber poetry never tired of repeating his favorite theme: "Man is but the Universe grown conscious." Author of some four "testaments," six plays, three novels and various collections of poems and essays, Davidson died by his own hand at Penzance in 1909.

The theme of "A Ballad of a Nun" is one which has attracted many writers since the Middle Ages, but Davidson has given it a turn which makes the tale sound far fresher than Vollmoeller's employment of it in *The Miracle.*

Davidson's work may be divided into three stages. His first phase, announced in *The North Wall* (1885), was conscious cleverness. In the second stage he tried to reach sophisticated audiences, attempting the metropolitan note with sketches, plays and novels in the manner of the febrile Nineties. It was not until *Ballads and Songs* and *The Last Ballad* (1899) that he struck what for him and his readers was the true note. "A Ballad of Hell" and "A Ballad of a Nun," among others, are infused with the old ballad spirit; they have the traditional reach and vigor, modernized without becoming topical, pointed but not over-personalized. The first ends, after a gathering climax, on a high and genuinely heroic note.

After 1900 Davidson's work suffered. As his biographer R. M. Wenley puts it, "cosmogonic passion overwhelming him, the artist pales before the prophet in travail." Somberness developed into pessimism, pessimism into self-persecution. He identified himself with James Thomson (see page 76), another maladjusted soul; he became paranoiac, losing himself in "strange passions, outlandish affaires, overstrung rhetoric." Over-emphasizing extremes, his later work was not only neurotic but melodramatic. Hysteria tainted a half-Nietzschean, half-Calvinistic philosophy; his twisted apprehension of the "hero" concept of history (in which he seemed to himself one of the defeated martyrs) was, as Wenley remarks, "like other Neo-Romantics'—from Nietzsche *in excelsis* to D'Annunzio *in inferis.*"

But it is only in his last phase that Davidson turned from singing to shrieking. His huge and misshapen trilogies are forgotten;

his exaggerated colors have faded; the ballads and a few of the lyrics remain. They have persistent if not permanent stuff.

## A BALLAD OF HELL

"A letter from my love today!
Oh, unexpected, dear appeal!"
She struck a happy tear away,
And broke the crimson seal.

"My love, there is no help on earth,
No help in heaven; the dead-man's bell
Must toll our wedding; our first hearth
Must be the well-paved floor of hell."

The color died from out her face,
Her eyes like ghostly candles shone;
She cast dread looks about the place,
Then clenched her teeth and read right on.

"I may not pass the prison door;
Here must I rot from day to day,
Unless I wed whom I abhor,
My cousin, Blanche of Valencay.

"At midnight with my dagger keen,
I'll take my life; it must be so.
Meet me in hell tonight, my queen,
For weal and woe."

She laughed, although her face was wan,
She girded on her golden belt,
She took her jeweled ivory fan,
And at her glowing missal knelt.

Then rose, "And am I mad?" she said:
She broke her fan, her belt untied;
With leather girt herself instead,
And stuck a dagger at her side.

She waited, shuddering in her room,
Till sleep had fallen on all the house.
She never flinched; she faced her doom:
They two must sin to keep their vows.

Then out into the night she went,
And, stooping, crept by hedge and tree;
Her rose-bush flung a snare of scent,
And caught a happy memory.

She fell, and lay a minute's space;
She tore the sward in her distress;
The dewy grass refreshed her face;
She rose and ran with lifted dress.

She started like a morn-caught ghost
Once when the moon came out and stood
To watch; the naked road she crossed,
And dived into the murmuring wood.

The branches snatched her streaming cloak;
A live thing shrieked; she made no stay!
She hurried to the trysting-oak—
Right well she knew the way.

Without a pause she bared her breast,
And drove her dagger home and fell,
And lay like one that takes her rest,
And died and wakened up in hell.

She bathed her spirit in the flame,
And near the center took her post;
From all sides to her ears there came
The dreary anguish of the lost.

The devil started at her side,
Comely, and tall, and black as jet.
"I am young Malespina's bride;
Has he come hither yet?"

"My poppet, welcome to your bed."
"Is Malespina here?"
"Not he! Tomorrow he must wed
His cousin Blanche, my dear!"

"You lie, he died with me tonight."
"Not he! it was a plot" . . . "You lie."
"My dear, I never lie outright."
"We died at midnight, he and I."

The devil went. Without a groan
She, gathered up in one fierce prayer,
Took root in hell's midst all alone,
And waited for him there.

She dared to make herself at home
Amidst the wail, the uneasy stir.
The blood-stained flame that filled the dome,
Scentless and silent, shrouded her.

How long she stayed I cannot tell;
But when she felt his perfidy,
She marched across the floor of hell;
And all the damned stood up to see.

The devil stopped her at the brink:
She shook him off; she cried, "Away!"
"My dear, you have gone mad, I think."
"I was betrayed: I will not stay."

Across the weltering deep she ran;
A stranger thing was never seen:
The damned stood silent to a man;
They saw the great gulf set between.

To her it seemed a meadow fair;
And flowers sprang up about her feet.
She entered heaven; she climbed the stair
And knelt down at the mercy-seat.

Seraphs and saints with one great voice
Welcomed that soul that knew not fear.
Amazed to find it could rejoice,
Hell raised a hoarse, half-human cheer.

## IMAGINATION

(*From "New Year's Eve"*)

There is a dish to hold the sea,
  A brazier to contain the sun,
A compass for the galaxy,
  A voice to wake the dead and done!

That minister of ministers,
  Imagination, gathers up
The undiscovered Universe,
  Like jewels in a jasper cup.

Its flame can mingle north and south;
  Its accent with the thunder strive;
The ruddy sentence of its mouth
  Can make the ancient dead alive.

The mart of power, the fount of will,
  The form and mold of every star,
The source and bound of good and ill,
  The key of all the things that are,

Imagination, new and strange
  In every age, can turn the year;
Can shift the poles and lightly change
  The mood of men, the world's career.

## THE OUTCAST

Soul, be your own
  Pleasance and mart,
A land unknown,
  A state apart.

Scowl and be rude
  Should love entice;
Call gratitude
  The costliest vice.

Deride the ill
  By fortune sent;
Be scornful still
  If foes repent.

When curse and stone
  Are hissed and hurled,
Aloof, alone
  Disdain the world.

Soul, disregard
  The bad, the good;
Be haughty, hard,
  Misunderstood.

Be neutral; spare
  No humblest lie,
And overbear
  Authority.

Laugh wisdom down;
  Abandon fate;
Shame the renown
  Of all the great.

Dethrone the past;
  Deed, vision—naught
Avails at last
  Save your own thought.

Though on all hands
  The powers unsheathe
Their lightning-brands
  And from beneath,

And from above
  One curse be hurled
With scorn, with love
  Affront the world.

## HIS HEART WAS WORN AND SORE

His heart was worn and sore;
He was old before his time;
He had wasted half his life.

Night—it was always night,
And never a star above:
But the ring of a manly stroke,
The flash of a gentle look,
The touch of a comrade's hand
Groping for his on the march,
Were more to him than the day.
At the thought of his youth,
At the pulse of love,
At the swoop of death,
He sang aloud in the dark,
And touched the heart of the world.

## THE UNKNOWN

To brave and to know the unknown
  Is the high world's motive and mark,
Though the way with snares be strewn.

The earth itself alone
  Wheels through the light and the dark
Onward to meet the unknown.

Each soul, upright or prone,
  While the owl sings or the lark,
Must pass where the bones are strewn.

Power on the loftiest throne
  Can fashion no certain ark
That shall stem and outride the unknown.

Beauty must doff her zone,
  Strength trudge unarmed and stark
Though the way with eyes be strewn.

This only can atone,
The high world's motive and mark,
To brave and to know the unknown
Though the way with fire be strewn.

## A BALLAD OF A NUN

From Eastertide to Eastertide
For ten long years her patient knees
Engraved the stones—the fittest bride
Of Christ in all the diocese.

She conquered every earthly lust;
The abbess loved her more and more;
And, as a mark of perfect trust,
Made her the keeper of the door.

High on a hill the convent hung,
Across a duchy looking down,
Where everlasting mountains flung
Their shadows over tower and town.

The jewels of their lofty snows
In constellations flashed at night;
Above their crests the moon arose;
The deep earth shuddered with delight.

Long ere she left her cloudy bed,
Still dreaming in the orient land,
On many a mountain's happy head
Dawn lightly laid her rosy hand.

The adventurous sun took heaven by storm;
Clouds scattered largesses of rain;
The sounding cities, rich and warm,
Smoldered and glittered in the plain.

Sometimes it was a wandering wind,
Sometimes the fragrance of the pine,
Sometimes the thought how others sinned,
That turned her sweet blood into wine.

Sometimes she heard a serenade
  Complaining sweetly far away:
She said, "A young man woos a maid";
  And dreamt of love till break of day.

Then she would ply her knotted scourge
  Until she swooned; but evermore
She had the same red sin to purge,
  Poor, passionate keeper of the door!

For still night's starry scroll unfurled,
  And still the day came like a flood:
It was the greatness of the world
  That made her long to use her blood.

In winter-time when Lent drew nigh,
  And hill and plain were wrapped in snow,
She watched beneath the frosty sky
  The nearest city nightly glow.

Like peals of airy bells outworn
  Faint laughter died above her head
In gusts of broken music borne:
  "They keep the Carnival," she said.

Her hungry heart devoured the town:
  "Heaven save me by a miracle!
Unless God sends an angel down,
  Thither I go though it were Hell."

Fillet and veil in strips she tore;
  Her golden tresses floated wide;
The ring and bracelet that she wore
  As Christ's betrothed, she cast aside.

"Life's dearest meaning I shall probe;
  Lo! I shall taste of love at last!
Away!" She doffed her outer robe,
  And sent it sailing down the blast.

Her body seemed to warm the wind;
With bleeding feet o'er ice she ran:
"I leave the righteous God behind;
I go to worship sinful man."

She reached the sounding city's gate;
No question did the warder ask:
He passed her in: "Welcome, wild mate!"
He thought her some fantastic mask.

Half-naked through the town she went;
Each footstep left a bloody mark;
Crowds followed her with looks intent;
Her bright eyes made the torches dark.

Alone and watching in the street
There stood a grave youth nobly dressed;
To him she knelt and kissed his feet;
Her face her great desire confessed.

Straight to his house the nun he led:
"Strange lady, what would you with me?"
"Your love, your love, sweet lord," she said;
"I bring you my virginity."

He healed her bosom with a kiss;
She gave him all her passion's hoard;
And sobbed and murmured ever, "This
Is life's great meaning, dear, my lord.

"I care not for my broken vows;
Though God should come in thunder soon,
I am sister to the mountains now,
And sister to the sun and moon."

Through all the towns of Belmarie
She made a progress like a queen.
"She is," they said, "whate'er she be,
The strangest woman ever seen.

"From fairyland she must have come,
Or else she is a mermaiden."
Some said she was a ghoul, and some
A heathen goddess born again.

But soon her fire to ashes burned;
Her beauty changed to haggardness;
Her golden hair to silver turned;
The hour came of her last caress.

At midnight from her lonely bed
She rose, and said, "I have had my will."
The old ragged robe she donned, and fled
Back to the convent on the hill.

Half-naked as she went before,
She hurried to the city wall,
Unnoticed in the rush and roar
And splendor of the carnival.

She ran across the icy plain;
Her worn blood curdled in the blast;
Each footstep left a crimson stain;
The white-faced moon looked on aghast.

She said between her chattering jaws,
"Deep peace is mine, I cease to strive;
Oh, comfortable convent laws,
That bury foolish nuns alive!

"A trowel for my passing-bell,
A little bed within the wall,
A coverlet of stones; how well
I there shall keep the Carnival!"

Like tired bells chiming in their sleep,
The wind faint peals of laughter bore;
She stopped her ears and climbed the steep
And thundered at the convent door.

It opened straight: she entered in,
And at the wardress' feet fell prone:
"I come to purge away my sin;
Bury me, close me up in stone."

The wardress raised her tenderly;
She touched her wet and fast-shut eyes:
"Look, sister; sister, look at me;
Look; can you see through my disguise?"

She looked and saw her own sad face,
And trembled, wondering, "Who art thou?"
"God sent me down to fill your place:
I am the Virgin Mary now."

And with the word, God's mother shone:
The wanderer whispered, "Mary, hail!"
The vision helped her to put on
Bracelet and fillet, ring and veil.

"You are sister to the mountains now,
And sister to the day and night;
Sister to God." And on the brow
She kissed her thrice, and left her sight,

While dreaming in her cloudy bed,
Far in the crimson orient land,
On many a mountain's happy head
Dawn lightly laid her rosy hand.

## A. MARY F. ROBINSON

A. Mary F. Robinson—or, as she sometimes signed herself, Madame James Darmesteter—was born at Leamington in 1857. She was educated at University College, where she specialized in Greek literature, and at various colleges in Brussels and Italy. In 1888 she married M. James Darmesteter, the famous Orientalist, who later became director of the Pasteur Institute in Paris.

The author of two novels and several volumes of verse, Mme. Robinson-Darmesteter's first volume was *A Handful of Honeysuckle* (1878). This was followed eight years later by *An Italian Garden* (1886) which attracted notable comment and won for the

author an enthusiastic circle of readers. Her most characteristic later volume is *Retrospect* (1893), wherein the poet may be seen at her best in songs not unlike the early lyrics of Sara Teasdale.

### RISPETTO

What good is there, ah, me, what good in Love?
Since, even if you love me, we must part;
And since for either, an' you cared enough,
There's but division and a broken heart?

And yet, God knows, to hear you say: My Dear!
I would lie down and stretch me on the bier.
And yet would I, to hear you say: My Own!
With mine own hands drag down the burial stone.

### THE PRESENT AGE

We stand upon a bridge between two stars.
And one is half engulfed in the Abyss;
While unarisen still the other is,
Hidden behind the Orient's cloudy bars.

We tread indeed a perilous path by night!
Yet we who walk in darkness unaghast
Prepare the future and redeem the past,
That after us the Morning-star be bright.

### SELVA OSCURA

In a wood
Far away,
Thrushes brood,
Ravens prey,
Eagles circle overhead,
Through the boughs a bird drops dead.

Wild and high,
The angry wind
Wanders by
And cannot find
Any limit to the wood
Full of cries and solitude.

William Watson was born at Burley-in-Wharfedale, Yorkshire, August 2, 1858. He achieved his first success through his long poems on Wordsworth, Shelley, and Tennyson—poems that attempted, sometimes successfully, to combine the manners of these masters. *The Hope of the World* (1897) contains some of his most characteristic though often too rhetorical verse.

He was knighted in 1917, and it was understood that he would be appointed poet laureate upon the death of Alfred Austin. But some of his radical and semi-political poems are supposed to have displeased the powers at Court, and the honor went to Robert Bridges. His best work, which is notable for its dignity and molded imagination, may be found in *Selected Poems*, published in 1902 by John Lane Co. His later, less interesting verse was published in *The Man Who Saw* (1917) and *The Superhuman Antagonists* (1919).

A larger, more inclusive *Selected Poems of Sir William Watson*, chosen by the poet himself, was published in 1927. This volume shows, rather pathetically, the rise and decline of a poet miscast in the rôle of prophet. The vatic note seems to have dwindled to irritation, an irritation caused mainly by a younger order of writers. Too much of Watson's time has been devoted to extolling the tradition he worships and attacking a kind of poetry he dislikes and which, one suspects, he does not understand. His exasperations aside, Watson is capable of producing effects both large and fine. "Ode in May" is a flawless expression of its kind; the song, "April, April" is deservedly famous; the "Epigrams" have certainty and wit. It is in the longer poems that Watson is paradoxically most and least himself. Summoning the wraiths of Wordsworth, Milton, Tennyson, he achieves the state of the devotee who merges his own identity in that which he worships. But Watson, alas, is not in essence an illumined disciple, only a bemused priest repeating an old ritual. Since his idol is not a single or defined figure, he loses his own identity without reflecting a better one, becoming almost a composite parody of the Royal Purple trend in English letters. The shorter poems escape this stricture.

### ODE IN MAY

Let me go forth, and share
The overflowing Sun
With one wise friend, or one
Better than wise, being fair,

Where the pewit wheels and dips
On heights of bracken and ling,
And Earth, unto her leaflet tips,
Tingles with the Spring.

What is so sweet and dear
As a prosperous morn in May,
The confident prime of the day,
And the dauntless youth of the year,
When nothing that asks for bliss,
Asking aright, is denied,
And half of the world a bridegroom is,
And half of the world a bride?

The Song of Mingling flows,
Grave, ceremonial, pure,
As once, from lips that endure,
The cosmic descant rose,
When the temporal lord of life,
Going his golden way,
Had taken a wondrous maid to wife
That long had said him nay.

For of old the Sun, our sire,
Came wooing the mother of men,
Earth, that was virginal then,
Vestal fire to his fire.
Silent her bosom and coy,
But the strong god sued and pressed;
And born of their starry nuptial joy
Are all that drink of her breast.

And the triumph of him that begot,
And the travail of her that bore,
Behold, they are evermore
As warp and weft in our lot.
We are children of splendor and flame,
Of shuddering, also, and tears.
Magnificent out of the dust we came,
And abject from the Spheres.

O bright irresistible lord,
We are fruit of Earth's womb, each one,
And fruit of thy loins, O Sun,
Whence first was the seed outpoured.
To thee as our Father we bow,
Forbidden thy Father to see,
Who is older and greater than thou, as thou
Art greater and older than we.

Thou art but as a word of his speech,
Thou art but as a wave of his hand;
Thou art brief as a glitter of sand
'Twixt tide and tide on his beach;
Thou art less than a spark of his fire,
Or a moment's mood of his soul:
Thou art lost in the notes on the lips of his choir
That chant the chant of the Whole.

## ESTRANGEMENT

So, without overt breach, we fall apart,
Tacitly sunder—neither you nor I
Conscious of one intelligible Why,
And both, from severance, winning equal smart.
So, with resigned and acquiescent heart,
Whene'er your name on some chance lip may lie,
I seem to see an alien shade pass by,
A spirit wherein I have no lot or part.

Thus may a captive, in some fortress grim,
From casual speech betwixt his warders, learn
That June on her triumphal progress goes
Through arched and bannered woodlands; while for him
She is a legend emptied of concern,
And idle is the rumor of the rose.

## SONG

April, April,
Laugh thy girlish laughter;
Then, the moment after,

Weep thy girlish tears,
April, that mine ears
Like a lover greetest,
If I tell thee, sweetest,
All my hopes and fear.
April, April,
Laugh thy golden laughter,
But, the moment after,
Weep thy golden tears!

## WORLD-STRANGENESS

Strange the world about me lies,
Never yet familiar grown—
Still disturbs me with surprise,
Haunts me like a face half-known.

In this house with starry dome,
Floored with gemlike plains and seas,
Shall I never feel at home,
Never wholly be at ease?

On from room to room I stray,
Yet my Host can ne'er espy,
And I know not to this day
Whether guest or captive I.

So, between the starry dome
And the floor of plains and seas,
I have never felt at home,
Never wholly been at ease.

## FOUR EPIGRAMS

The statue—Buonarroti said—doth wait,
Thralled in the block for me to liberate.
The poem—saith the poet—wanders free
Till I betray it to captivity.

*

The Poet gathers fruit from every tree,
Yea, grapes from thorns and figs from thistles he.

Pluck'd by his hand, the basest weed that grows
Towers to a lily, reddens to a rose.

*

Love, like a bird, hath perch'd upon a spray
For thee and me to hearken what he sings.
Contented, he forgets to fly away;
But hush! . . . remind not Eros of his wings.

*

The children romp within the graveyard's pale;
The lark sings o'er a madhouse or a jail;
Such nice antitheses of perfect poise
Chance in her curious rhetoric employs.

## FRANCIS THOMPSON

Francis Thompson was born at Ashton in Lancashire in 1859. The son of a doctor, he was intended for the profession and took the medical course at Owens College, Manchester. He had, however, no interest in medicine, but from youth evinced a passion for religion, particularly for the highly colored ritual of Catholicism.

His attempts to earn a living were a succession of failures. He was employed as a book-agent and sold no books; he was apprenticed to the boot trade and spent many hours of his apprenticeship in public libraries; he enlisted as a soldier and was discharged as incompetent. He went to London, as Francis Meynell says, "not so much to seek his fortune as to escape his bad fortune. He lost in the gamble, but literature gained. He lived for four years as errand man, seller of matches, holder of horses' heads. Soon he became too shabby to gain admittance into the public libraries, so that when one says that desire of reading was with him a passion, one restores to its literal meaning that abused word. He slept on the Embankment, and 'saw the traffic of Jacob's ladder Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.' A woman of the streets took pity on him and kept him alive by her charity—the spirit and the deed. He began to write—now for the first time. His poem, 'Dream Tryst,' written on blue sugar wrapping, found after many months an editorial welcome. Thereafter he was persuaded, though with difficulty, to come off the streets; and even to give up for many years the laudanum he had been taking. For the remaining nineteen years of his life he had an existence at any rate three-quarters

protected from the physical tragedies of his starved and homeless young manhood."

Francis Meynell does not name the persons who gave Thompson "an editorial welcome" and who provided him with the shelter which made it possible for him to continue writing and, for that matter, living. These persons were Wilfred Meynell (later to become Thompson's editor and executor) and the poet Alice Meynell (see page 192), who named their son Francis after the genius who became his godfather.

Thompson's first volume, *Poems*, appeared in 1893, disclosing beneath a surface of wild metaphors and violent neologisms an affinity with the august. This volume was followed by *Sisters Songs* (1895) and *New Poems* (1897). In these, as well as in the essays on De Quincey and Shelley, there was tropical strangeness. Plenitude is here not only in the large concept but in the small detail. Here are metaphors as bold as

> . . . laden with its lampèd clusters bright
> The fiery-fruited vineyard of this night.

and

> I broke through the doors of sunset,
> Ran before the hooves of sunrise.

The "Anthem of Earth," from which the last quotation is taken, is second only to Thompson's highest achievement. "The Hound of Heaven," which Coventry Patmore declared "one of the very few 'great' odes the language can boast," has captured more readers than any religious poem of this century. In a mystic circle, in which the God-pursuing is the God-pursued, the poem moves with the unhurried majesty of a Bach Chorale, building verse upon fugual verse into an unterrestrial architecture. Recognition of a divine order is celebrated with an almost divine excess. Everything, like Thompson's bright laburnum, spills its "honey of wild flame."

Thompson's poetry was embedded in his philosophy to an unusual degree; he saw all things related and linked by immortal power. It was a super-Berkeley who wrote:

> . . . thou canst not stir a flower
> Without troubling of a star.

Thompson's philosophy, however, exalted though it was, could not maintain him on the heights. Rapture and despair fought within him. "Down the arcane where Night would perish in night," he wandered, lost in "incredible excess"; the heart's cry in "The Dread of Height" sounds the ecstatic reaches and profound depths

which his spirit touched. His suspensions were unresolved. But if neither man nor nature granted him final solution, the Church offered him serenity, and no singer has ever put the Catholic creed to more inspired measures.

Influenced at first by the dazzling Crashaw and the conceits of the seventeenth century metaphysicians, Thompson allowed himself the fullest play of purple-pompous tropes. He was as prodigal with strange colors and curious words as a child; the words he applied to characterize Shelley might be used with even greater justice to describe Thompson himself: "To the last, in a degree uncommon even among poets, he retained the idiosyncrasy of childhood, expanded and matured without differentiation. To the last, he was the enchanted child."

Riotous images and extravagant archaisms were Thompson's delight and his defect; he toyed with a style that loved to toss the stars and swing constellations by the hair. His was, not infrequently, a baroque magnificence. He often confused glitter with gold, painting the sublime in terms of the theatrical, falling from the grand manner into the grand-opera manner. At his worst, Thompson overdressed his lines with a showy vocabulary; at his best, he attained true sublimity. Such poems as "A Fallen Yew," "Ode to the Setting Sun," "Any Saint," "In No Strange Land," and, first and last, "The Hound of Heaven," provide a noble shrine for a noble vision. Here he captured, if only for glowing moments, the Grail, a glory of which most of his nimbler contemporaries were not even aware.

Thompson died, after a fragile and spasmodic life, in St. John's Wood, London, in November, 1907. Since that time, several *Selected Poems* have revealed Thompson's pomp and prodigality to a new generation; an inexpensive *Complete Poetical Works* may be found in The Modern Library.

## DAISY

Where the thistle lifts a purple crown
  Six foot out of the turf,
And the harebell shakes on the windy hill—
  O breath of the distant surf!—

The hills look over on the South,
  And southward dreams the sea;
And with the sea-breeze hand in hand
  Came innocence and she.

Where 'mid the gorse the raspberry
  Red for the gatherer springs;
Two children did we stray and talk
  Wise, idle, childish things.

She listened with big-lipped surprise,
  Breast-deep 'mid flower and spine:
Her skin was like a grape whose veins
  Run snow instead of wine.

She knew not those sweet words she spake,
  Nor knew her own sweet way;
But there's never a bird, so sweet a song
  Thronged in whose throat all day.

Oh, there were flowers in Storrington
  On the turf and on the spray;
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills
  Was the Daisy-flower that day!

Her beauty smoothed earth's furrowed face.
  She gave me tokens three:—
A look, a word of her winsome mouth,
  And a wild raspberry.

A berry red, a guileless look,
  A still word,—strings of sand!
And yet they made my wild, wild heart
  Fly down to her little hand.

For standing artless as the air
  And candid as the skies,
She took the berries with her hand
  And the love with her sweet eyes.

The fairest things have fleetest end,
  Their scent survives their close:
But the rose's scent is bitterness
  To him that loved the rose.

She looked a little wistfully,
  Then went her sunshine way:—
The sea's eye had a mist on it,
  And the leaves fell from the day.

She went her unremembering way,
  She went and left in me
The pang of all the partings gone,
  And partings yet to be.

She left me marveling why my soul
  Was sad that she was glad;
At all the sadness in the sweet,
  The sweetness in the sad.

Still, still I seemed to see her, still
  Look up with soft replies,
And take the berries with her hand,
  And the love with her lovely eyes.

Nothing begins, and nothing ends,
  That is not paid with moan,
For we are born in other's pain,
  And perish in our own.

## TO A SNOWFLAKE

What heart could have thought you?—
Past our devisal
(O filigree petal!)
Fashioned so purely,
Fragilely, surely,
From what Paradisal
Imagineless metal,
Too costly for cost?
Who hammered you, wrought you,
From argentine vapor?—

"God was my shaper.
Passing surmisal,
He hammered, He wrought me,
From curled silver vapor,

To lust of his mind:—
Thou couldst not have thought me!
So purely, so palely,
Tinily, surely,
Mightily, frailly,
Insculped and embossed,
With His hammer of wind,
And His graver of frost."

## AN ARAB LOVE-SONG

The hunchèd camels of the night [1]
Trouble the bright
And silver waters of the moon.
The Maiden of the Morn will soon
Through Heaven stray and sing,
Star gathering.

Now while the dark about our loves is strewn,
Light of my dark, blood of my heart, O come!
And night will catch her breath up, and be dumb.

Leave thy father, leave thy mother
And thy brother;
Leave the black tents of thy tribe apart!
Am I not thy father and thy brother,
And thy mother?
And thou—what needest with thy tribe's black tents
Who hast the red pavilion of my heart?

## ALL'S VAST

O nothing, in this corporal earth of man,
That to the imminent heaven of his high soul
Responds with color and with shadow, can
Lack correlated greatness. If the scroll
Where thoughts lie fast in spell of hieroglyph
Be mighty through its mighty inhabitants;
If God be in His Name; grave potence if
The sounds unbind of hieratic chants;

[1] Cloud-shapes observed by travelers in the East.

All's vast that vastness means. Nay, I affirm
Nature is whole in her least things exprest,
Nor know we with what scope God builds the worm.
Our towns are copied fragments from our breast;
And all man's Babylons strive but to impart
The grandeurs of his Babylonian heart.

## EPILOGUE

(*From "A Judgment in Heaven"*)

Heaven, which man's generations draws,
Nor deviates into replicas,
Must of as deep diversity
In judgment as creation be.
There is no expeditious road
To pack and label men for God,
And save them by the barrel-load.
Some may perchance, with strange surprise,
Have blundered into Paradise.
In vasty dusk of life abroad,
They fondly thought to err from God,
Nor knew the circle that they trod;
And, wandering all the night about,
Found them at morn where they set out.
Death dawned; Heaven lay in prospect wide:—
Lo! they were standing by His side!

## THE POPPY

(*To Monica*)

Summer set lip to earth's bosom bare,
And left the flushed print in a poppy there:
Like a yawn of fire from the grass it came,
And the fanning wind puffed it to flapping flame.

With burnt mouth, red like a lion's, it drank
The blood of the sun as he slaughtered sank,
And dipped its cup in the purpurate shine
When the Eastern conduits ran with wine.

Till it grew lethargied with fierce bliss,
And hot as a swinked gypsy is,
And drowsed in sleepy savageries,
With mouth wide a-pout for a sultry kiss.

A child and man paced side by side,
Treading the skirts of eventide;
But between the clasp of his hand and hers
Lay, felt not, twenty withered years.

She turned, with the rout of her dusk South hair,
And saw the sleeping gypsy there:
And snatched and snapped it in swift child's whim,
With—"Keep it, long as you live!"—to him.

And his smile, as nymphs from their laving meres,
Trembled up from a bath of tears;
And joy, like a mew sea-rocked apart,
Tossed on the waves of his troubled heart.

For *he* saw what she did not see,
That—as kindled by its own fervency—
The verge shriveled inward smolderingly:
And suddenly 'twixt his hand and hers
He knew the twenty withered years—
No flower, but twenty shriveled years.

"Was never such thing until this hour,"
Low to his heart he said; "the flower
Of sleep brings wakening to me,
And of oblivion, memory.

"Was never this thing to me," he said,
"Though with bruisèd poppies my feet are red!"
And again to his own heart very low:
"Oh child! I love, for I love and know;

"But you, who love nor know at all
The diverse chambers in Love's guest-hall,
Where some rise early, few sit long:
In how differing accents hear the throng
His great Pentecostal tongue;

"Who know not love from amity,
Nor my reported self from me;
A fair fit gift is this, meseems,
You give—this withering flower of dreams.

"O frankly fickle, and fickly true,
Do you know what the days will do to you?
To your love and you what the days will do,
O frankly fickle, and fickly true?

"You have loved me, Fair, three lives—or days:
'Twill pass with the passing of my face.
But where *I* go, your face goes too,
To watch lest I play false to you.

"I am but, my sweet, your foster-lover,
Knowing well when certain years are over
You vanish from me to another;
Yet I know, and love, like the foster-mother.

"So, frankly fickle, and fickly true!
For my brief life-while I take from you
This token, fair and fit, meseems,
For me—this withering flower of dreams."

The sleep-flower sways in the wheat its head,
Heavy with dreams, as that with bread:
The goodly grain and the sun-flushed sleeper
The reaper reaps, and Time the reaper.

I hang 'mid men my needless head,
And my fruit is dreams, as theirs is bread:
The goodly men and the sun-hazed sleeper
Time shall reap, but after the reaper
The world shall glean of me, me the sleeper.

Love, love! your flower of withered dream
In leavèd rhyme lies safe, I deem,
Sheltered and shut in a nook of rhyme,
From the reaper man, and his reaper Time.

Love! *I* fall into the claws of Time:
But lasts within a leavèd rhyme
All that the world of me esteems—
My withered dreams, my withered dreams.

## THE SUN

(*From "Ode to the Setting Sun"*)

Who lit the furnace of the mammoth's heart?
Who shagged him like Pilatus' ribbèd flanks?
Who raised the columned ranks
Of that old pre-diluvian forestry,
Which like a continent torn oppressed the sea,
When the ancient heavens did in rains depart,
While the high-dancèd whirls
Of the tossed scud made hiss thy drenchèd curls?
Thou rear'dst the enormous brood;
Who hast with life imbued
The lion maned in tawny majesty,
The tiger velvet-barred,
The stealthy-stepping pard,
And the lithe panther's flexous symmetry?

How came the entombèd tree a light-bearer,
Though sunk in lightless lair?
Friend of the forgers of earth,
Mate of the earthquake and thunders volcanic,
Clasped in the arms of the forces Titanic
Which rock like a cradle the girth
Of the ether-hung world;
Swart son of the swarthy mine,
When flame on the breath of his nostrils feeds
How is his countenance half-divine,
Like thee in thy sanguine weeds?
Thou gavest him his light,
Though sepultured in night
Beneath the dead bones of a perished world;
Over his prostrate form
Though cold, and heat, and storm,
The mountainous wrack of a creation hurled.

Who made the splendid rose
Saturate with purple glows;
Cupped to the marge with beauty; a perfume-press
Whence the wind vintages
Gushes of warmèd fragrance richer far
Than all the flavorous ooze of Cyprus' vats?
Lo, in yon gale which waves her green cymar,
With dusky cheeks burnt red
She sways her heavy head,
Drunk with the must of her own odorousness;
While in a moted trouble the vexed gnats
Maze, and vibrate, and tease the noontide hush.
Who girt dissolvèd lightnings in the grape?
Summered the opal with an Irised flush?
Is it not thou that dost the tulip drape,
And huest the daffodilly,
Yet who hast snowed the lily,
And her frail sister, whom the waters name,
Dost vestal-vesture 'mid the blaze of June,
Cold as the new-sprung girlhood of the moon
Ere Autumn's kiss sultry her cheek with flame?
Thou sway'st thy sceptered beam
O'er all delight and dream,
Beauty is beautiful but in thy glance:
And like a jocund maid
In garland-flowers arrayed,
Before thy ark Earth keeps her sacred dance.

## A FALLEN YEW

It seemed corrival of the world's great prime,
Made to un-edge the scythe of Time,
And last with stateliest rhyme.

No tender Dryad ever did indue
That rigid chiton of rough yew,
To fret her white flesh through:

But some god like to those grim Asgard lords,
Who walk the fables of the hordes
From Scandinavian fjords,

Upheaved its stubborn girth, and raised unriven,
Against the whirl-blast and the levin,
Defiant arms to Heaven.

When doom puffed out the stars, we might have said,
It would decline its heavy head,
And see the world to bed.

For this firm yew did from the vassal leas,
And rain and air, its tributaries,
Its revenues increase,

And levy impost on the golden sun,
Take the blind years as they might run,
And no fate seek or shun.

But now our yew is strook, is fallen—yea,
Hacked like dull wood of every day
To this and that, men say.

Never!—To Hades' shadowy shipyards gone,
Dim barge of Dis, down Acheron
It drops, or Lethe wan.

Stirred by its fall—poor destined bark of Dis!—
Along my soul a bruit there is
Of echoing images,

Reverberations of mortality:
Spelt backward from its death, to me
Its life reads saddenedly.

Its breast was hollowed as the tooth of eld;
And boys, there creeping unbeheld,
A laughing moment dwelled.

Yet they, within its very heart so crept,
Reached not the heart that courage kept
With winds and years beswept.

And in its boughs did close and kindly nest
The birds, as they within its breast,
By all its leaves caressed.

But bird nor child might touch by any art
Each other's or the tree's hid heart,
A whole God's breadth apart;

The breadth of God, the breadth of death and life!
Even so, even so, in undreamed strife
With pulseless Law, the wife,—

The sweetest wife on sweetest marriage-day,—
Their souls at grapple in mid-way,
Sweet to her sweet may say:

"I take you to my inmost heart, my true!"
Ah, fool! but there is one heart you
Shall never take him to!

The hold that falls not when the town is got,
The heart's heart, whose immurèd plot
Hath keys yourself keep not!

Its ports you cannot burst—you are withstood—
For him that to your listening blood
Sends precepts as he would.

Its gates are deaf to Love, high summoner;
Yea, love's great warrant runs not there:
You are your prisoner.

Yourself are with yourself the sole consortress
In that unleaguerable fortress;
It knows you not for portress.

Its keys are at the cincture hung of God;
Its gates are trepidant to His nod;
By Him its floors are trod.

And if His feet shall rock those floors in wrath,
Or blest aspersion sleek His path,
Is only choice it hath.

Yea, in that ultimate heart's occult abode
To lie as in an oubliette of God,
Or in a bower untrod,

Built by a secret Lover for His Spouse;—
Sole choice is this your life allows,
Sad tree, whose perishing boughs
So few birds house!

## A COUNSEL OF MODERATION

On him the unpetitioned heavens descend,
Who heaven on earth proposes not for end;
The perilous and celestial excess
Taking with peace, lacking with thankfulness.
Bliss in extreme befits thee not until
Thou'rt not extreme in bliss; be equal still:
Sweets to be granted think thyself unmeet
Till thou have learned to hold sweet not too sweet.

This thing not far is he from wise in art
Who teacheth; nor who doth, from wise in heart.

## ANY SAINT

(*Condensed*)

His shoulder did I hold
Too high that I, o'erbold
Weak one,
Should lean thereon.

But He a little hath
Declined His stately path
And my
Feet set more high;

That the slack arm may reach
His shoulder, and faint speech
Stir
His unwithering hair.

And bolder now and bolder
I lean upon that shoulder,
So dear
He is and near:

And with His aureole
The tresses of my soul
Are blent
In wished content.

Yea, this too gentle Lover
Hath flattering words to move her
To pride
By His sweet side.

Ah, Love! somewhat let be—
Lest my humility
Grow weak
When Thou dost speak.

Rebate Thy tender suit,
Lest to herself impute
Some worth
Thy bride of earth!

A maid too easily
Conceits herself to be
Those things
Her lover sings;

And being straitly wooed,
Believes herself the Good
And Fair
He seeks in her.

Turn something of Thy look,
And fear me with rebuke,
That I
May timorously

Take tremors in Thy arms,
And with contrivèd charms
Allure
A love unsure.

Not to me, not to me,
Builded so flawfully,
O God,
Thy humbling laud!

Not to this man, but Man,—
Universe in a span;
Point
Of the spheres conjoint;

In whom eternally
Thou, Light, dost focus Thee!—
Didst pave
The way o' the wave.

. . . . .

Thou meaning, couldst thou see,
Of all which dafteth thee;
So plain,
It mocks thy pain.

Stone of the Law indeed,
Thine own self couldst thou read;
Thy bliss
Within thee is.

Compost of Heaven and mire,
Slow foot and swift desire!
Lo,
To have Yes, choose No;

. . . . .

To feel thyself and be
His dear nonentity—
Caught
Beyond human thought

In the thunder-spout of Him,
Until thy being dim,
And be
Dead deathlessly.

Stoop, stoop; for thou dost fear
The nettle's wrathful spear,
So slight
Art thou of might!

Rise; for Heaven hath no frown
When thou to thee pluck'st down,
Strong clod!
The neck of God.

## THE HOUND OF HEAVEN

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes I sped;
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat—and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet—
"All things betray thee, who betrayest Me."

I pleaded, outlaw-wise,
By many a hearted casement, curtained red,
Trellised with intertwining charities;
(For, though I knew His love Who followèd,
Yet was I sore adread
Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside);
But, if one little casement parted wide,
The gust of His approach would clash it to:
Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to pursue.
Across the margent of the world I fled,

And troubled the gold gateways of the stars,
Smiting for shelter on their clangèd bars;
Fretted to dulcet jars
And silvern chatter the pale ports o' the moon.
I said to Dawn: Be sudden—to Eve: Be soon;
With thy young skiey blossoms heap me over
From this tremendous Lover—
Float thy vague veil about me, lest He see!
I tempted all His servitors, but to find
My own betrayal in their constancy,
In faith to Him their fickleness to me,
Their traitorous trueness, and their loyal deceit.
To all swift things for swiftness did I sue;
Clung to the whistling mane of every wind.
But whether they swept, smoothly fleet,
The long savannahs of the blue;
Or whether, Thunder-driven,
They clanged his chariot 'thwart a heaven,
Plashy with flying lightnings round the spurn o' their feet:—
Fear wist not to evade as Love wist to pursue.
Still with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
Came on the following Feet,
And a Voice above their beat—
"Naught shelters thee, who wilt not shelter Me."

I sought no more that after which I strayed
In face or man or maid;
But still within the little children's eyes
Seems something, something that replies,
*They* at least are for me, surely for me!
I turned me to them very wistfully;
But just as their young eyes grew sudden fair
With dawning answers there,
Their angel plucked them from me by the hair.
"Come then, ye other children, Nature's—share
With me" (said I) "your delicate fellowship;
Let me greet you lip to lip,

Let me twine with you caresses,
Wantoning
With our Lady-Mother's vagrant tresses,
Banqueting
With her in her wind-walled palace,
Underneath her azured daïs,
Quaffing, as your taintless way is,
From a chalice
Lucent-weeping out of the dayspring."
So it was done:
*I* in their delicate fellowship was one—
Drew the bolt of Nature's secrecies.
*I* knew all the swift importings
On the willful face of skies;
I knew how the clouds arise
Spumèd of the wild sea-snortings;
All that's born or dies
Rose and drooped with; made them shapers
Of mine own moods, or wailful or divine;
With them joyed and was bereaven.
I was heavy with the even,
When she lit her glimmering tapers
Round the day's dead sanctities.
I laughed in the morning's eyes.
I triumphed and I saddened with all weather,
Heaven and I wept together,
And its sweet tears were salt with mortal mine;

Against the red throb of its sunset-heart
I laid my own to beat,
And share commingling heat;
But not by that, by that, was eased my human smart.
In vain my tears were wet on Heaven's gray cheek.
For ah! we know not what each other says,
These things and I; in sound *I* speak—
*Their* sound is but their stir, they speak by silences.
Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my drouth;
Let her, if she would owe me,
Drop yon blue bosom-veil of sky, and show me
The breasts o' her tenderness:
Never did any milk of hers once bless
My thirsting mouth.

Nigh and nigh draws the chase,
With unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy;
And past those noisèd Feet
A Voice comes yet more fleet—
"Lo! naught contents thee, who content'st not Me."

Naked I wait Thy love's uplifted stroke!
My harness piece by piece Thou hast hewn from me,
And smitten me to my knee;
I am defenseless utterly.
I slept, methinks, and woke,
And, slowly gazing, find me stripped in sleep.
In the rash lustihead of my young powers,
I shook the pillaring hours
And pulled my life upon me; grimed with smears,
I stand amid the dust o' the mounded years—
My mangled youth lies dead beneath the heap.
My days have crackled and gone up in smoke,
Have puffed and burst as sun-starts on a stream.
Yea, faileth now even dream
The dreamer, and the lute the lutanist;
Even the linked fantasies, in whose blossomy twist
I swung the earth a trinket at my wrist,
Are yielding; cords of all too weak account
For earth with heavy griefs so overplused.
Ah! is Thy love indeed
A weed, albeit an amaranthine weed,
Suffering no flowers except its own to mount?
Ah! must—
Designer infinite!—
Ah! must Thou char the wood ere Thou canst limn with it?
My freshness spent its wavering shower i' the dust;
And now my heart is as a broken fount,
Wherein tear-drippings stagnate, spilt down ever
From the dank thoughts that shiver
Upon the sighful branches of my mind.
Such is; what is to be?
The pulp so bitter, how shall taste the rind?
I dimly guess what Time in mists confounds;
Yet ever and anon a trumpet sounds
From the hid battlements of Eternity;

Those shaken mists a space unsettle, then
Round the half-glimpsèd turrets slowly wash again.
But not ere him who summoneth
I first have seen, enwound
With glooming robes purpureal, cypress-crowned;
His name I know, and what his trumpet saith.
Whether man's heart or life it be which yields
Thee harvest, must Thy harvest-fields
Be dunged with rotten death?

Now of that long pursuit
Comes on at hand the bruit;
That Voice is round me like a bursting sea:
"And is thy earth so marred,
Shattered in shard on shard?
Lo, all things fly thee, for thou fliest Me!
Strange, piteous, futile thing!
Wherefore should any set thee love apart?
Seeing none but I makes much of naught" (He said),
"And human love needs human meriting:
How hast thou merited—
Of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?
Alack, thou knowest not
How little worthy of any love thou art!
Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee
Save Me, save only Me?
All which I took from thee I did but take,
Not for thy harms,
But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.
All which thy child's mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp My hand, and come!"

Halts by me that footfall:
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?
"Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He Whom thou seekest!
Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me."

### FROM "GRACE OF THE WAY"

Now of that vision I, bereaven,
  This knowledge keep, that may not dim:
Short arm needs man to reach to Heaven,
  So ready is Heaven to stoop to him.

### TO OLIVIA

I fear to love thee, Sweet, because
Love's the ambassador of loss;
White flake of childhood, clinging so
To my soiled raiment, thy shy snow
At tenderest touch will shrink and go.
Love me not, delightful child.
My heart, by many snares beguiled,
Has grown timorous and wild.
It would fear thee not at all,
Wert thou not so harmless-small.
Because thy arrows, not yet dire,
Are still unbarbed with destined fire,
I fear thee more than hadst thou stood
Full-panoplied in womanhood.

### "IN NO STRANGE LAND"[1]

O world invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee!

Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air—
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumor of thee there?

Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumbed conceiving soars!—
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

[1] These verses, unpublished during his lifetime, were found among Francis Thompson's papers after his death.

The angels keep their ancient places;
Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangèd faces,
That miss the many-splendored thing.

But, when so sad thou canst not sadder,
Cry;—and upon thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.

Yea, in the night, my Soul, my daughter,
Cry,—clinging Heaven by the hems;
And lo, Christ walking on the water
Not of Gennesareth, but Thames!

## A. E. HOUSMAN

A(lfred) E(dward) Housman was born March 26, 1859, and educated at Oxford where he received his M.A. He was a Higher Division Clerk in the British Patent Office for ten years (1882-1892), leaving the office to become a teacher. He was professor of Latin at University College, London, from 1892 to 1911, professor of Latin at Cambridge after 1911, being one of the finest classical scholars of his time.

He is known to the world at large as the author of *A Shropshire Lad;* his entire non-classical output consisting of only two small volumes of poems, published almost thirty years apart. The popularity of the first of these was exceeded only by Fitzgerald's *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám.* The extraordinary success of both Fitzgerald and Housman is the more curious since both voice a philosophy compounded of pessimism and defeat. Though obviously not Oriental, Housman's fatalism is the darker of the two. Fitzgerald escapes from a world of frustration to a world of sensation; Housman does not even make the gesture of escape. Khayyám's remedy is drink; Housman's is suicide. Such concepts, dismal at the core, could never have found favor had they not been expressed in peculiarly glamorous music. Both Fitzgerald and Housman wrote with such compelling grace that, for the moment, they make darkness seem desirable. It is, however, doubtful whether readers pay much heed to the central philosophy, being carried on if not convinced by the brisk and brilliant measures.

*A Shropshire Lad* is limited in range and idea. Nature is not kind; lovers are untrue; men cheat and girls betray; lads, though lightfoot, drink and die; an occasional drum calls to a conflict

without reason, a struggle without hope. Nevertheless, courage is dominant, declared over and over in such poems as "Reveillé," "When Smoke Stood Up from Ludlow," "The Chestnut Casts His Flambeaux," and Housman's bitter but fearless philosophy attains bravery in his "Epilogue."

Purely as writing, however, *A Shropshire Lad* is incomparable. Owing nothing to any poet of his own generation and showing no influence other than Heine's, Housman's verse is condensed to the uttermost, stripped of every superfluous ornament, pared and precise. Not the least of his triumph is the mingling of pungent humor and poignance in lines of haunting melody. Possibly the outstanding virtue is the seemingly artless but extraordinarily skillful simplicity of tone. This is song sharpened, acid-flavored, yet always song.

*A Shropshire Lad* was first published in 1896 when Housman was thirty-seven, although several of the lyrics were written when the poet was younger. After a silence of twenty-six years, there appeared his *Last Poems* (1922). The title is significant, Housman saying, "I publish these poems, few though they are, because it is not likely that I shall ever be impelled to write much more. I can no longer expect to be revisited by the continuous excitement under which in the early months of 1895 I wrote the greater part of my other book, nor indeed could I well sustain it if it came." Most of the second volume belongs to an earlier period, to dates between 1895 and 1910. Here in *Last Poems* the Shropshire lad lives again to pipe his mournful-merry tunes; here again the roselipt maiden kisses carelessly as ever, and the heart out of the bosom is given in vain. Here Wenlock Edge is still in trouble, young men shoulder the sky and face the hills whose comfort cannot delay "the beautiful and deathstruck year." The pessimism assumes a half-careless, half-heroic note. The rhythms are a trifle slower, the cadences somewhat more hesitant, but Housman's command of his instrument is unfaltering. The two volumes contain at least a dozen flawless songs which already are part of the world's treasure—songs which are often extended epigrams.

Besides the two remarkable sets of lyrics, Housman has edited Juvenal and the works of Manilius, supplying the latter with a preface which is invaluable not only as an introduction to Manilius, but as an interpretation of a Housman not revealed in his poems.

### REVEILLÉ

Wake: the silver dusk returning
  Up the beach of darkness brims,
And the ship of sunrise burning
  Strands upon the eastern rims.

Wake: the vaulted shadow shatters,
Trampled to the floor it spanned,
And the tent of night in tatters
Straws the sky-pavilioned land.

Up, lad, up, 'tis late for lying:
Hear the drums of morning play;
Hark, the empty highways crying
"Who'll beyond the hills away?"

Towns and countries woo together,
Forelands beacon, belfries call;
Never lad that trod on leather
Lived to feast his heart with all.

Up, lad: thews that lie and cumber
Sunlit pallets never thrive;
Morns abed and daylight slumber
Were not meant for man alive.

Clay lies still, but blood's a rover;
Breath's a ware that will not keep.
Up, lad: when the journey's over
There'll be time enough to sleep.

## WHEN I WAS ONE-AND-TWENTY

When I was one-and-twenty
I heard a wise man say,
"Give crowns and pounds and guineas
But not your heart away;
Give pearls away and rubies
But keep your fancy free."
But I was one-and-twenty,
No use to talk to me.

When I was one-and-twenty
I heard him say again,
"The heart out of the bosom
Was never given in vain;

'Tis paid with sighs a-plenty
And sold for endless rue."
And I am two-and-twenty,
And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.

## "WITH RUE MY HEART IS LADEN"

With rue my heart is laden
For golden friends I had,
For many a rose-lipt maiden
And many a lightfoot lad.

By brooks too broad for leaping
The lightfoot boys are laid;
The rose-lipt girls are sleeping
In fields where roses fade.

## TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG

The time you won your town the race
We chaired you through the market-place;
Man and boy stood cheering by,
And home we brought you shoulder-high.

Today, the road all runners come,
Shoulder-high we bring you home,
And set you at your threshold down,
Townsman of a stiller town.

Smart lad, to slip betimes away
From fields where glory does not stay,
And early though the laurel grows
It withers quicker than the rose.

Eyes the shady night has shut
Cannot see the record cut,
And silence sounds no worse than cheers
After earth has stopped the ears:

Now you will not swell the rout
Of lads that wore their honors out,
Runners whom renown outran
And the name died before the man.

So set, before its echoes fade,
The fleet foot on the sill of shade,
And hold to the low lintel up
The still-defended challenge-cup.

And round that early-laureled head
Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,
And find unwithered on its curls
The garland briefer than a girl's.

## "LOVELIEST OF TREES"

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

## THE DEAD LOVER

"Is my team plowing,
That I was used to drive
And hear the harness jingle
When I was man alive?"

Aye, the horses trample,
The harness jingles now;
No change though you lie under
The land you used to plow.

"Is football playing
Along the river shore,
With lads to chase the leather,
Now I stand up no more?"

Aye, the ball is flying,
The lads play heart and soul;
The goal stands up, the keeper
Stands up to keep the goal.

"Is my girl happy,
That I thought hard to leave,
And has she tired of weeping
As she lies down at eve?"

Aye, she lies down lightly,
She lies not down to weep:
Your girl is well contented.
Be still, my lad, and sleep.

"Is my friend hearty,
Now I am thin and pine;
And has he found to sleep in
A better bed than mine?"

Aye, lad, I lie easy,
I lie as lads would choose;
I cheer a dead man's sweetheart.
Never ask me whose.

## "WHEN SMOKE STOOD UP FROM LUDLOW"

When smoke stood up from Ludlow,
And mist blew off from Teme,
And blithe afield to plowing
Against the morning beam
I strode beside my team,

The blackbird in the coppice
Looked out to see me stride,
And hearkened as I whistled
The trampling team beside,
And fluted and replied:

"Lie down, lie down, young yeoman;
What use to rise and rise?
Rise man a thousand mornings
Yet down at last he lies,
And then the man is wise."

I heard the tune he sang me,
And spied his yellow bill;
I picked a stone and aimed it
And threw it with a will:
And then the bird was still.

Then my soul within me
Took up the blackbird's strain,
And still beside the horses
Along the dewy lane
It sang the song again:

"Lie down, lie down, young yeoman;
The sun moves always west;
The road one treads to labor
Will lead one home to rest,
And that will be the best."

## "WHEN I WATCH THE LIVING MEET"

When I watch the living meet,
And the moving pageant file
Warm and breathing through the street
Where I lodge a little while,

If the heats of hate and lust
In the house of flesh are strong,
Let me mind the house of dust
Where my sojourn shall be long.

In the nation that is not
Nothing stands that stood before;
There revenges are forgot,
And the hater hates no more;

Lovers lying two and two
  Ask not whom they sleep beside,
And the bridegroom all night through
  Never turns him to the bride.

## THE IMMORTAL PART

When I meet the morning beam,
Or lay me down at night to dream,
I hear my bones within me say,
"Another night, another day.

"When shall this slough of sense be cast,
This dust of thoughts be laid at last,
The man of flesh and soul be slain
And the man of bone remain?

"This tongue that talks, these lungs that shout,
These thews that hustle us about,
This brain that fills the skull with schemes,
And its humming hive of dreams,—

"These today are proud in power
And lord it in their little hour:
The immortal bones obey control
Of dying flesh and dying soul.

" 'Tis long till eve and morn are gone:
Slow the endless night comes on,
And late to fullness grows the birth
That shall last as long as earth.

"Wanderers eastward, wanderers west,
Know you why you cannot rest?
'Tis that every mother's son
Travails with a skeleton.

"Lie down in the bed of dust;
Bear the fruit that bear you must;
Bring the eternal seed to light,
And morn is all the same as night.

"Rest you so from trouble sore,
Fear the heat o' the sun no more,
Nor the snowing winter wild,
Now you labor not with child.

"Empty vessel, garment cast,
We that wore you long shall last.
—Another night, another day."
So my bones within me say.

Therefore they shall do my will
Today while I am master still,
And flesh and soul, now both are strong,
Shall hale the sullen slaves along,

Before this fire of sense decay,
This smoke of thought blow clean away,
And leave with ancient night alone
The steadfast and enduring bone.

## "ON WENLOCK EDGE"

On Wenlock Edge the wood's in trouble;
His forest fleece the Wrekin heaves;
The gale, it plies the saplings double,
And thick on Severn snow the leaves.

'Twould blow like this through hold and hangar
When Uricon the city stood:
'Tis the old wind in the old anger,
But then it threshed another wood.

Then, 'twas before my time, the Roman
At yonder heaving hill would stare:
The blood that warms an English yeoman,
The thoughts that hurt him, they were there.

There, like the wind through woods in riot,
Through him the gale of life blew high;
The tree of man was never quiet:
Then 'twas the Roman, now 'tis I.

The gale, it plies the saplings double,
It blows so hard, 'twill soon be gone:
Today the Roman and his trouble
Are ashes under Uricon.

## "OH, WHEN I WAS IN LOVE WITH YOU"

Oh, when I was in love with you,
Then I was clean and brave,
And miles around the wonder grew
How well did I behave.

And now the fancy passes by,
And nothing will remain,
And miles around they'll say that I
Am quite myself again.

## "ALONG THE FIELD AS WE CAME BY"

Along the field as we came by
A year ago, my love and I,
The aspen over stile and stone
Was talking to itself alone.
"Oh, who are these that kiss and pass?
A country lover and his lass;
Two lovers looking to be wed;
And time shall put them both to bed,
But she shall lie with earth above,
And he beside another love."

And sure enough beneath the tree
There walks another love with me,
And overhead the aspen heaves
Its rainy-sounding silver leaves;
And I spell nothing in their stir,
But now perhaps they speak to her,
And plain for her to understand
They talk about a time at hand
When I shall sleep with clover clad,
And she beside another lad.

## "ON THE IDLE HILL OF SUMMER"

On the idle hill of summer,
  Sleepy with the flow of streams,
Far I hear the steady drummer
  Drumming like a noise in dreams.

Far and near and low and louder
  On the roads of earth go by,
Dear to friends and food for powder,
  Soldiers marching, all to die.

East and west on fields forgotten
  Bleach the bones of comrades slain,
Lovely lads and dead and rotten;
  None that go return again.

Far the calling bugles hollo,
  High the screaming fife replies,
Gay the files of scarlet follow:
  Woman bore me, I will rise.

## BREDON HILL

In summertime on Bredon
  The bells they sound so clear;
Round both the shires they ring them
  In steeples far and near,
  A happy noise to hear.

Here of a Sunday morning
  My love and I would lie,
And see the colored counties,
  And hear the larks so high
  About us in the sky.

The bells would ring to call her
  In valleys miles away:
"Come all to church, good people;
  Good people, come and pray."
  But here my love would stay.

And I would turn and answer
Among the springing thyme,
"Oh, peal upon our wedding,
And we will hear the chime,
And come to church in time."

But when the snows at Christmas
On Bredon top were strown,
My love rose up so early
And stole out unbeknown
And went to church alone.

They tolled the one bell only,
Groom there was none to see,
The mourners followed after,
And so to church went she,
And would not wait for me.

The bells they sound on Bredon,
And still the steeples hum.
"Come all to church, good people,—"
Oh, noisy bells, be dumb;
I hear you, I will come.

## LANCER

I 'listed at home for a lancer,
*Oh who would not sleep with the brave?*
I 'listed at home for a lancer
To ride on a horse to my grave.

And over the seas we were bidden
A country to take and to keep;
And far with the brave I have ridden,
And now with the brave I shall sleep.

For round me the men will be lying
That learned me the way to behave,
And showed me my business of dying:
*Oh who would not sleep with the brave?*

They ask and there is not an answer;
Says I, I will 'list for a lancer,
*Oh who would not sleep with the brave?*

And I with the brave shall be sleeping
At ease on my mattress of loam,
When back from their taking and keeping
The squadron is riding at home.

The wind with the plumes will be playing,
The girls will stand watching them wave,
And eyeing my comrades and saying
*Oh who would not sleep with the brave?*

They ask and there is not an answer;
Says you, I will 'list for a lancer,
*Oh who would not sleep with the brave?*

## "THE CHESTNUT CASTS HIS FLAMBEAUX, AND THE FLOWERS"

The chestnut casts his flambeaux, and the flowers
Stream from the hawthorn on the wind away,
The doors clap to, the pane is blind with showers.
Pass me the can, lad; there's an end of May.

There's one spoilt spring to scant our mortal lot,
One season ruined of our little store.
May will be fine next year as like as not:
Oh, aye, but then we shall be twenty-four.

We for a certainty are not the first
Have sat in taverns while the tempest hurled
Their hopeful plans to emptiness, and cursed
Whatever brute and blackguard made the world.

It is in truth iniquity on high
To cheat our sentenced souls of aught they crave,
And mar the merriment as you and I
Fare on our long fool's errand to the grave.

Iniquity it is; but pass the can.
My lad, no pair of kings our mothers bore;
Our only portion is the estate of man:
We want the moon, but we shall get no more.

If here today the cloud of thunder lours
Tomorrow it will hie on far behests;
The flesh will grieve on other bones than ours
Soon, and the soul will mourn in other breasts.

The troubles of our proud and angry dust
Are from eternity, and shall not fail.
Bear them we can, and if we can we must.
Shoulder the sky, my lad, and drink your ale.

## EIGHT O'CLOCK

He stood, and heard the steeple
Sprinkle the quarters on the morning town.
One, two, three, four, to market-place and people
It tossed them down.

Strapped, noosed, nighing his hour,
He stood and counted them and cursed his luck;
And then the clock collected in the tower
Its strength, and struck.

## EPILOGUE

"Terence, this is stupid stuff;
You eat your victuals fast enough;
There can't be much amiss, 'tis clear,
To see the rate you drink your beer.
But oh, good Lord, the verse you make,
It gives a chap the belly-ache.
The cow, the old cow, she is dead;
It sleeps well, the horned head:
We poor lads, 'tis our turn now
To hear such tunes as killed the cow.
Pretty friendship 'tis to rhyme
Your friends to death before their time
Moping melancholy mad:
Come, pipe a tune to dance to, lad."

Why, if 'tis dancing you would be,
There's brisker pipes than poetry.
Say, for what were hop-yards meant,
Or why was Burton built on Trent?
Oh, many a peer of England brews
Livelier liquor than the Muse,
And malt does more than Milton can
To justify God's ways to man.
Ale, man, ale's the stuff to drink
For fellows whom it hurts to think:
Look into the pewter pot
To see the world as the world's not.
And faith, 'tis pleasant till 'tis past:
The mischief is that 'twill not last.
Oh, I have been to Ludlow fair
And left my necktie God knows where,
And carried half way home, or near,
Pints and quarts of Ludlow beer:
Then the world seemed none so bad,
And I myself a sterling lad;
And down in lovely muck I've lain,
Happy till I woke again.
Then I saw the morning sky:
Heigho, the tale was all a lie;
The world, it was the old world yet,
I was I, my things were wet,
And nothing now remained to do
But begin the game anew.

Therefore, since the world has still
Much good, but much less good than ill,
And while the sun and moon endure
Luck's a chance, but trouble's sure,
I'd face it as a wise man would,
And train for ill and not for good.
'Tis true, the stuff I bring for sale
Is not so brisk a brew as ale:
Out of a stem that scored the hand
I wrung it in a weary land.
But take it: if the smack is sour,
The better for the embittered hour;

It should do good to heart and head
When your soul is in my soul's stead;
And I will friend you, if I may,
In the dark and cloudy day.

There was a king reigned in the East:
There, when kings will sit to feast,
They get their fill before they think
With poisoned meat and poisoned drink.
He gathered all that springs to birth
From the many-venomed earth;
First a little, thence to more,
He sampled all her killing store;
And easy, smiling, seasoned sound,
Sate the king when healths went round.
They put arsenic in his meat
And stared aghast to watch him eat;
They poured strychnine in his cup
And shook to see him drink it up:
They shook, they stared as white's their shirt:
Them it was their poison hurt.
—I tell the tale that I heard told.
Mithridates, he died old.

## DOUGLAS HYDE

Doctor Douglas Hyde was born in Roscommon County, Ireland, in, as nearly as can be ascertained, 1860. One of the most brilliant Irish scholars of his day, he worked indefatigably for the cause of his native letters. He wrote a comprehensive history of Irish literature; compiled, edited and translated into English the *Love Songs of Connaught;* was President of The Irish National Literary Society; and is the author of innumerable poems in Gaelic—far more than he ever wrote in English. His collections of Irish folk-lore and poetry were among the most notable contributions to the Celtic revival; they were (see Preface), to a large extent, responsible for it. Since 1909 he has been Professor of Modern Irish in University College, Dublin.

The poems here quoted are two of his many sensitive and reanimating translations. In the music and peculiar rhyme-scheme of the first, the paraphraser reproduces the peculiar flavor as well as the color of the West Irish original. His work deserves a wider audience than it has received.

## I SHALL NOT DIE FOR THEE

(*From the Irish*)

For thee, I shall not die,
Woman of high fame and name;
Foolish men thou mayest slay.
I and they are not the same.

Why should I expire
For the fire of an eye,
Slender waist or swan-like limb,
Is't for them that I should die?

The round breasts, the fresh skin,
Cheeks crimson, hair so long and rich;
Indeed, indeed, I shall not die,
Please God, not I, for any such.

The golden hair, the forehead thin,
The chaste mien, the gracious ease,
The rounded heel, the languid tone,—
Fools alone find death from these.

Thy sharp wit, thy perfect calm,
Thy thin palm like foam o' the sea;
Thy white neck, thy blue eye,
I shall not die for thee.

Woman, graceful as the swan,
A wise man did nurture me.
Little palm, white neck, bright eye,
I shall not die for ye.

## MY GRIEF ON THE SEA

(*From the Irish*)

My grief on the sea,
How the waves of it roll!
For they heave between me
And the love of my soul!

Abandon'd, forsaken,
To grief and to care,
Will the sea ever waken
Relief from despair?

My grief and my trouble!
Would he and I were
In the province of Leinster,
Or County of Clare!

Would I and my darling—
O heart-bitter wound!—
On board of the ship
For America bound.

On a green bed of rushes
All last night I lay,
And I flung it abroad
With the heat of the day.

And my Love came behind me,
He came from the South;
His breast to my bosom,
His mouth to my mouth.

## AMY LEVY

Amy Levy, a singularly gifted Jewess, was born at Clapham, in 1861. A fiery young poet, she burdened her own difficulties with the brooding sorrows of her race. She wrote one novel, *Reuben Sachs*, and two volumes of poetry—the more distinctive of the two being half pathetically, half ironically entitled *A Minor Poet* (1884). After several years of tragic introspection, she committed suicide in 1889 at the age of twenty-eight. Her "Epitaph" is a bitter snatch of self-revelation. "In the Mile End Road" is typical of the dramatic-lyrical style she was trying to perfect.

### EPITAPH

(*On a Commonplace Person Who Died in Bed*)

This is the end of him, here he lies:
The dust in his throat, the worm in his eyes,

The mold in his mouth, the turf on his breast;
This is the end of him, this is best.
He will never lie on his couch awake,
Wide-eyed, tearless, till dim daybreak.
Never again will he smile and smile
When his heart is breaking all the while.
He will never stretch out his hands in vain
Groping and groping—never again.
Never ask for bread, get a stone instead,
Never pretend that the stone is bread;
Nor sway and sway 'twixt the false and true
Weighing and noting the long hours through.
Never ache and ache with the choked-up sighs . . .
This is the end of him, here he lies.

### IN THE MILE END ROAD

How like her! But 'tis she herself,
Comes up the crowded street!
How little did I think, this morn,
My only love to meet!

Who else that motion and that mien?
Whose else that airy tread?
For one strange moment I forgot
My only love was dead.

## KATHARINE TYNAN HINKSON

Katharine Tynan was born at Dublin in 1861, and educated at the Convent of St. Catherine at Drogheda. She married Henry Hinkson, a lawyer and author, in 1893. Her poetry is largely actuated by religious themes, and much of her verse is devotional yet distinctive. She was one of the members though not one of the leaders of the Irish Renaissance.

Although she has written many novels, miracle plays, memoirs and books of verse, she is at her best in *New Poems* (1911). The lines are graceful and meditative, with occasional notes of deep pathos. Of the more recent volumes, the most interesting are *Flower of Youth* (1914), *Late Songs* (1917) and *Evensong* (1922).

Her autobiographical account of the Irish Renaissance is set forth in *Twenty-Five Years* (1913) and *Memories* (1924).

## SHEEP AND LAMBS

All in the April morning,
April airs were abroad;
The sheep with their little lambs
Pass'd me by on the road.

The sheep with their little lambs
Pass'd me by on the road;
All in an April evening
I thought on the Lamb of God.

The lambs were weary, and crying
With a weak human cry;
I thought on the Lamb of God
Going meekly to die.

Up in the blue, blue mountains
Dewy pastures are sweet:
Rest for the little bodies,
Rest for the little feet.

Rest for the Lamb of God
Up on the hill-top green;
Only a cross of shame
Two stark crosses between.

All in the April evening,
April airs were abroad;
I saw the sheep with their lambs,
And thought on the Lamb of God.

## ALL SOULS

The door of Heaven is on the latch
Tonight, and many a one is fain
To go home for one's night's watch
With his love again.

Oh, where the father and mother sit
There's a drift of dead leaves at the door
Like pitter-patter of little feet
That come no more.

Their thoughts are in the night and cold,
Their tears are heavier than the clay,
But who is this at the threshold
So young and gay?

They are come from the land o' the young,
They have forgotten how to weep;
Words of comfort on the tongue,
And a kiss to keep.

They sit down and they stay awhile,
Kisses and comfort none shall lack;
At morn they steal forth with a smile
And a long look back.

### SLOW SPRING

O year, grow slowly. Exquisite, holy,
The days go on
With almonds showing the pink stars blowing,
And birds in the dawn.

Grow slowly, year, like a child that is dear,
Or a lamb that is mild,
By little steps, and by little skips,
Like a lamb or a child.

## MARY E. COLERIDGE

Mary Elizabeth Coleridge, the great-niece of Samuel T. Coleridge, was born in September, 1861. Her childhood was, she wrote, "vague and twilit, and I can recall scarcely anything except sharp sensations of fear that broke the dull dream of my days." She dwelt in books, reading Shakespeare before she entered her teens. At thirteen, she became acquainted with her father's friend, William Johnson (the William Cory of *Ionica*) and the influence of this poet and scholar remained throughout her life. Her taste in literature was catholic; she was a passionate admirer of Browning, and Tolstoy so affected her that it was only after a great struggle and with the realization of her own physical incapacity, that she abandoned the idea of devoting her life to the poor. As it was, she taught needy girls desiring education, and during the last twelve years of her life taught at The Working Women's College. She died in August 1907.

Her first novel, *The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus* (1893), was a wild fantasia ignored by the public though praised by Stevenson. Two years later Robert Bridges saw a manuscript of her verse and urged its publication. It appeared as *Fancy's Following* (1896), over the pseudonym of "Anodos." Tales, essays, novels followed, one of which—*The King with Two Faces* (1897)—was a sudden success. Two posthumous volumes furnish a complete summary of her qualities: *Gathered Leaves from the Prose of Mary E. Coleridge*, with a Memoir by Edith Sichel (1911) and *Collected Poems*, in which the original forty-five have grown to two hundred and twenty-seven.

Her novels were never wholly satisfactory; they were, says Edith Sichel, "the novels of a poet, and this was her weakness and her strength." It is as a poet that she survives. Robert Bridges, in an essay in *The Cornhill Magazine* for November, 1907, compares her to Blake, Heine and Canon Dixon. There is some justification for summoning this queerly combined trio, since Mary Coleridge mingled, in a muted way, the clarity of the first, the *Minnesinger* simplicity of the second and the religious convictions (not mere religiosity) of the third. Hers is throughout a noble if diminishing verse, a quiet verse, not so much disciplined as inherently low-spoken. But poems like "Our Lady" and such brief lyrics as "I Saw a Stable" attest to the spontaneity which made this poet see the heavenly in the humble and the miraculous within the casual.

### OUR LADY

Mother of God—no lady thou:
  Common woman of common earth.
"Our Lady" ladies call thee now,
  But Christ was never of gentle birth;
  A common man of common earth.

For God's ways are not our ways.
  The noblest lady in the land
Would have given up half her days,
  Would have cut off her right hand
  To bear the child that was God of the land.

Never a lady did He choose,
  Only a maid of low degree,
So humble she might not refuse
  The carpenter of Galilee:
  A daughter of the people, she.

Out she sang the song of her heart.
Never a lady so had sung.
She knew no letters, had no art;
To all mankind, in woman's tongue,
Hath Israelitish Mary sung.

And still for men to come she sings,
Nor shall her singing pass away.
"*He hath fillèd the hungry with good things*"—
Oh, listen, lords and ladies gay—
"*And the rich He hath sent empty away.*"

## I SAW A STABLE

I saw a stable, low and very bare,
A little child in a manger.
The oxen knew Him, had Him in care,
To men he was a stranger.
The safety of the world was lying there—
And the world's danger.

## MORTAL COMBAT

It is because you were my friend,
I fought you as the devil fights.
Whatever fortune God may send,
For once I set the world to rights.

And that was when I thrust you down,
And stabbed you twice and twice again,
Because you dared take off your crown
And be a man like other men.

## GONE

About the chambers of my heart
Friends have been coming—going—many a year.
The doors stand open here.
Some, lightly stepping, enter; some depart.

Freely they come and freely go, at will.
The walls give back their laughter; all day long
They fill the house with song.
One door alone is shut, one chamber still.

## OWEN SEAMAN

Owen Seaman was born in 1861, educated at Clare College, became a schoolmaster (1884), professor of literature (1890), and an attorney (1894). In the meanwhile he wrote light verse and occasional parodies, but his début before a larger public was effected with "The Rhyme of the Kipperling," a burlesque of Kipling's "The Rhyme of the Three Sealers." This was published (1894) in *Punch*, the humorous periodical of which Seaman became assistant editor in 1898 and editor in 1906. He was knighted in 1914.

As a writer of light verse and as a parodist, his work has delighted a generation of admirers. Some of his most adroit lines may be found in his *In Cap and Bells* (1899), *The Battle of the Bays* (1896), *A Harvest of Chaff* (1904) and *Salvage* (1908). The serious verse in *War Time* (1915) and the later volumes reveals a much weaker talent, a capacity for rhyme that has little to recommend itself beyond a certain neatness of execution.

### TO AN OLD FOGEY

(*Who Contends that Christmas is Played Out*)

O frankly bald and obviously stout!
And so you find that Christmas as a fête
Dispassionately viewed, is getting out
Of date.

The studied festal air is overdone;
The humor of it grows a little thin;
You fail, in fact, to gather where the fun
Comes in.

Visions of very heavy meals arise
That tend to make your organism shiver;
Roast beef that irks, and pies that agonize
The liver;

Those pies at which you annually wince,
  Hearing the tale how happy months will follow
Proportioned to the total mass of mince
  You swallow.

Visions of youth whose reverence is scant,
  Who with the brutal *verve* of boyhood's prime
Insist on being taken to the pant-
  omime.

Of infants, sitting up extremely late,
  Who run you on toboggans down the stair;
Or make you fetch a rug and simulate
  A bear.

This takes your faultless trousers at the knees,
  The other hurts them rather more behind;
And both effect a fracture in your ease
  Of mind.

My good dyspeptic, this will never do;
  Your weary withers must be sadly wrung!
Yet once I well believe that even you
  Were young.

Time was when you devoured, like other boys,
  Plum-pudding sequent on a turkey-hen;
With cracker-mottoes hinting of the joys
  Of men.

Time was when 'mid the maidens you would pull
  The fiery raisin with profound delight;
When sprigs of mistletoe seemed beautiful
  And right.

Old Christmas changes not! Long, long ago
  He won the treasure of eternal youth;
*Yours* is the dotage—if you want to know
  The truth.

Come, now, I'll cure your case, and ask no fee:—
  Make others' happiness this once your own;
All else may pass: that joy can never be
  Outgrown!

Norman (Rowland) Gale was born in Kew, Surrey, in 1862. He was educated at Oxford and became a teacher by profession. Since 1892 he has devoted all his time to literature, publishing some eight volumes of pleasantly rustic verse. The nature of his poetry may be gathered from the titles of some of his books: *A Country Muse* (1892), *Orchard Songs* (1893), *A Verdant Country* (1894). *Collected Poems* was published in 1914.

*The Candid Cuckoo* (1918), *Verse in Bloom* (1925), *A Flight of Fancies* (1927) continue the thin strain of pastoral sweetness long drawn out.

## THE COUNTRY FAITH

Here in the country's heart
Where the grass is green
Life is the same sweet life
As it ever has been.

Trust in a God still lives,
And the bell at morn
Floats with the thought of God
Over the rising corn.

God comes down in the rain,
And the crop grows tall—
This is the country faith,
And the best of all!

## A SONG

First the fine, faint, dreaming motion
Of the tender blood
Circling in the veins of children—
This is Life, the bud.

Next the fresh, advancing beauty
Growing from the gloom,
Waking eyes and fuller blossom—
This is Life, the bloom.

Then the pain that follows after,
Grievous to be borne,
Pricking, steeped in subtle poisons—
This is Love, the thorn.

## HENRY NEWBOLT

Henry (John) Newbolt was born at Bilston in 1862 and educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He was called to the Bar in 1887 but retired from practice in 1899.

After editing *The Monthly Review* (1900-1904), he gave himself wholly to creative labor. His early work was frankly imitative of Tennyson; he even attempted to add to the Arthurian legends with a drama in blank verse entitled *Mordred* (1895). It was not until he wrote his sea-ballads that he struck his own note. With the publication of *Admirals All* (1897) and *The Island Race* (1898) his fame was widespread. The popularity of his lines was due not so much to the subject-matter of Newbolt's verse as to the breeziness of his music, the solid beat of rhythm, the vigorous swing of his stanzas. *Songs of the Fleet* (1910) repeats a sometimes too "salty" strain, but *The Linnet's Nest* (1927) discloses a quieter—and better—poet.

Besides being a personality of unusual persuasiveness as well as a poet, Newbolt has written many essays; his critical volume, *A New Study of English Poetry* (1917), is a collection of articles that are both analytical and alive. *New Paths on Helicon* (1927) is a balanced, non-partisan anthology of contemporary verse.

### DRAKE'S DRUM

Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Yarnder lumes the island, yarnder lie the ships,
Wi' sailor lads a-dancin' heel-an'-toe,
An' the shore-lights flashin', an' the night-tide dashin'
He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.

Drake he was a Devon man, an' ruled the Devon seas,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Rovin' tho' his death fell, he went wi' heart at ease,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe,

"Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the Channel as we drummed them long ago."

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas come.
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Slung atween the round shot, listenin' for the drum,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
Call him when ye sail to meet the foe;
Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag flyin',
They shall find him, ware an' wakin', as they found him long ago.

## THE NIGHTJAR

We loved our Nightjar, but she would not stay with us.
We had found her lying as dead, but soft and warm,
Under the apple tree beside the old thatched wall.
Two days we kept her in a basket by the fire,
Fed her, and thought she well might live—till suddenly
In the very moment of most confiding hope
She raised herself all tense, quivered, and drooped, and died.
Tears sprang into my eyes—why not? the heart of man
Soon sets itself to love a living companion
And more so if by chance it asks some care of him.
And this one had the kind of loveliness that goes
Far deeper than the optic nerve—full fathom five
To the soul's ocean cave, where Wonder and Reason
Tell their alternate dreams of how the world was made.
So wonderful she was—her wings the wings of night
But powdered here and there with tiny golden clouds
And wave-line markings like sea-ripples on the sand.
O how I wish I might never forget that bird—
Never!—but even now, like all beauty of earth,
She is fading from me into the dusk of Time.

Eden Phillpotts was born November 4, 1862, at Mount Abu, India, son of an English army officer. He was educated at Plymouth, England, and at seventeen entered the fire insurance business, remaining in it for more than ten years. It was during this time that Phillpotts began his stories, writing steadily at night. Finding literature a dubious profession at first, he tried acting and, though he was not a spectacularly successful player, his stage experience undoubtedly gave him a technique which he employed later in the construction of eminently successful dramas.

Phillpotts is best known for his Devonshire tales—an enthusiastic critic has said that Phillpotts did for Dartmoor what Hardy accomplished for Wessex—but his later work concerned itself more with medieval and classical backgrounds. An extraordinarily fecund author, a check-list as of 1929 shows three dozen publications since *Children of the Mist* in 1898. This list includes ten Devonshire novels, six historical narratives, four collections of short stories, four volumes of studies, two mystery tales, four plays (of which *The Farmer's Wife*, 1916, ran for years) and four books of poetry. *A Dish of Apples* (1921), *A Harvesting* (1924) and *Brother Man* (1926) are frequently derivative and undistinguished. But they are not without character. In the midst of much versifying, there is no little of the acrid, earthy flavor which abounds in the best of his stories of the soil.

## LITANY TO PAN

By the abortions of the teeming Spring,
By Summer's starved and withered offering,
By Autumn's stricken hope and Winter's sting,
Oh, hear!

By the ichneumon on the writhing worm,
By the swift far-flung poison of the germ,
By soft and foul brought out of hard and firm,
Oh, hear!

By the fierce battle under every blade,
By the etiolation of the shade,
By drought and thirst and things undone half made,
Oh, hear!

By all the horrors of re-quickened dust,
By the eternal waste of baffled lust,
By mildews and by cankers and by rust,
Oh, hear!

By the fierce scythe of Spring upon the wold,
By the dead weaning mother in the fold,
By stillborn, stricken young and tortured old,
Oh, hear!

By fading eyes pecked from a dying head,
By the hot mouthful of a thing not dead,
By all thy bleeding, struggling, shrieking red,
Oh, hear!

By all the agonies of all the past,
By earth's cold dust and ashes at the last,
By her return to the unconscious vast,
Oh, hear!

## THE HUNTING

When red sun fox steals down the sky,
And darkness dims the heavens high,
There leap again upon his tracks
The eager, starry, hunting packs.
They glitter, glitter, gold and green,
With sparks of frosty fire between,
And Dian bright as day;
While in the gloaming, far below,
Brown owl doth shout, "Hi! Tally Ho!
Sun fox hath gone away!"

To music of the spheres they sweep
Over the western world asleep;
Then in the east, with sudden rush,
Sun fox shall whisk his white-tipped brush.
The field is fading, gold and green,
With sparks of frosty fire between,
And Dian growing gray;
While morning leaps the hither hill
And herald lark shouts with a will,
"Sun fox hath gone away!"

Oh, Huntress fond and silly stars—
White Venus, fiery, futile Mars,
In vain your pack ye whirl and cast
Upon the marches of the vast;
Vainly ye glitter, gold and green,
With sparks of frosty fire between,
And Dian's arrows fly
In shattered shafts of ebbing light;
For ne'er shall day be caught by night,
And sun fox cannot die.

### THE GAFFER'S SONG

A sudden wakin', a sudden weepin';
A li'l suckin', a li'l sleepin';
A cheel's full joys an' a cheel's short sorrows,
Wi' a power o' faith in gert tomorrows.

Young blood red-hot an' the love of a maid;
Wan glorious hour as'll never fade;
Then shadows an' sunshine an' triumphs an' tears
Pile the gatherin' weight o' the flyin' years.

Now auld man's talk o' the days behind me;
My darter's youngest darter to mind me;
A li'l dreamin', a li'l dyin',
A li'l, lew corner o' airth to lie in.

## VICTOR PLARR

Victor (Gustave) Plarr was born June 21, 1863, near Strasbourg and came to Scotland at the age of seven, his father's house having been burnt in the Franco-German war of 1870. He was educated at St. Andrew's, studied medicine and, in 1897, became the librarian of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

Plarr was one of the less conspicuous members of that literary group which made the Nineties so famous. He was one of the founders of the Rhymers' Club and appeared in both volumes of its selected poems. His own collection, *In the Dorian Mood*, was published in 1896.

Although most of his lines scarcely rise above the level of competent verse-making, the tiny epitaph here reprinted bids fair to

survive Plarr's more ambitious but less successful poetry. Although Plarr seems fated to be known as the author of only "Epitaphium Citharistriae," yet "Ad Cinerarium," far from being a less worthy example of his work, may be said to equal if not surpass the better-known poem.

Plarr died in 1929.

## EPITAPHIUM CITHARISTRIAE

Stand not uttering sedately
  Trite oblivious praise above her!
Rather say you saw her lately
  Lightly kissing her last lover.

Whisper not, "There is a reason
  Why we bring her no white blossom":
Since the snowy bloom's in season
  Strow it on her sleeping bosom:

Oh, for it would be a pity
  To o'erpraise her or to flout her:
She was wild, and sweet, and witty—
  Let's not say dull things about her.

## AD CINERARIUM

Who in this small urn reposes,
  Celt or Roman, man or woman,
Steel of steel, or rose of roses?

Whose the dust set rustling slightly,
  In its hiding-place abiding,
When this urn is lifted lightly?

Sure some mourner deemed immortal
  What thou holdest and enfoldest,
Little house without a portal!

When the artificers had slowly
  Formed thee, turned thee, sealed thee, burned thee,
Freighted with thy freightage holy,

Sure he thought there's no forgetting
  All the sweetness and completeness
Of his rising, of her setting,

And so bade them grave no token,
  Generation, age, or nation,
On thy round side still unbroken;—

Let them score no cypress verses,
  Funeral glories, prayers, or stories,
Mourners' tears, or mourners' curses,

Round thy brown rim time has polished,—
  Left thee dumbly cold and comely
As some shrine of gods abolished.

Ah, 'tis well! It scarcely matters
  What is sleeping in the keeping
Of this house of human tatters,

Steel of steel, or rose of roses,
  Man or woman, Celt or Roman,
If but soundly he reposes!

## A. T. QUILLER-COUCH

Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch ("Q") was born in Bodwin, Cornwall, in 1863. His reputation rests chiefly on his skill as editor (he compiled *The Oxford Book of English Verse* in 1900 and *The Oxford Book of Ballads* a few years later), but Quiller-Couch has a large following in the dual rôle of lecturer and romancer.

Although practically unknown in America as a narrator, Quiller-Couch has established himself in England as one of the first to use the Cornish background later so much in vogue. A prolific author, he has written continuously and in every vein; a check-list in 1929 showed nine volumes of essays, three of poems, two collections of fairy-tales, and eleven novels, exclusive of his anthologies.

The semi-narrative lyrics are the best features of his three volumes of verse: *Green Bays* (1893), *Poems and Ballads* (1896) and *The Vigil of Venus* (1912).

### THE WHITE MOTH

*If a leaf rustled, she would start:*
*And yet she died a year ago.*
*How had so frail a thing the heart*
*To journey where she trembled so?*
*And do they turn and turn in fright,*
*Those little feet, in so much night?*

The light above the poet's head
Streamed on the page and on the cloth,
And twice and thrice there buffeted
On the black pane a white-winged moth:
'Twas Annie's soul that beat outside
And "Open, open, open!" cried:

"I could not find the way to God;
There were too many flaming suns
For signposts, and the fearful road
Led over wastes where millions
Of tangled comets hissed and burned—
I was bewildered and I turned.

"O, it was easy then! I knew
Your window and no star beside.
Look up, and take me back to you!"
—He rose and thrust the window wide.
'Twas but because his brain was hot
With rhyming, for he heard her not.

But poets polishing a phrase
Show anger over trivial things;
And as she blundered in the blaze
Towards him, on ecstatic wings,
He raised a hand and smote her dead;
Then wrote *"That I had died instead!"*

## ARTHUR SYMONS

Born in 1865 in Wales, of Cornish parents, Arthur Symons was educated at private schools, and was attracted at an early age to

the Symbolist movement, of which he became one of the leaders in England. His first few publications reveal an intellectual rather than an emotional passion. Those volumes—*Days and Nights* (1889), *Silhouettes* (1892), *London Nights* (1895)—are full of the artifice of the period, but Symons' technical skill and frequent analysis often save the poems from complete decadence. His later books are less imitative; the influence of Verlaine and Baudelaire is not so apparent. The scent of patchouli, the breath of heavy, narcotic blossoms still cling to many of the pages, but there is no longer the obsession with strange sensations, with what might be called the Deadly Nightshade school of poetry.

The best of Symons' poems have a firm delicacy of touch; they breathe an intimacy in which sophistication is not cynical and sensuousness is restrained. His various collections of essays and stories reflect the same blend of intellectuality and perfumed romanticism one finds in his poems.

After a silence of some years, Symons began to write in a less nostalgic and more critical vein. *Dramatis Personae* appeared in 1923; a limited edition of his *Collected Works* a year later. *The Symbolist Movement in Literature,* originally published in 1899, remains one of the best studies of the period.

Of his many volumes in prose, *Spiritual Adventures* (1905), while obviously influenced by Walter Pater, is by far the most original, an undeservedly neglected volume of psychological short stories. Most of his poetry up to 1902 was collected in two volumes, *Poems,* published by John Lane Co. *The Fool of the World* appeared in 1907; his dramatic *Tragedies* in 1916.

Appraisals of Symons' work have touched the extremes of adulation and denunciation. A final estimate of his work has not yet been reached. It is obvious that his early poetry, generated from weariness and literary wantonness, belongs to the literature of decadence. His later work is no longer preoccupied with orchids, scented handkerchiefs and the nuances of sensation. His mind, essentially healthy, threw off its infection and produced work of a clean and admirable precision.

"In the Wood of Finvara," "Modern Beauty," "The Crying of Water" and a dozen other lyrics are as simple as they are sensuous.

### IN THE WOOD OF FINVARA

I have grown tired of sorrow and human tears;
Life is a dream in the night, a fear among fears,
A naked runner lost in a storm of spears.

I have grown tired of rapture and love's desire;
Love is a flaming heart, and its flames aspire
Till they cloud the soul in the smoke of a windy fire.

I would wash the dust of the world in a soft green flood;
Here between sea and sea, in the fairy wood,
I have found a delicate, wave-green solitude.

Here, in the fairy wood, between sea and sea,
I have heard the song of a fairy bird in a tree,
And the peace that is not in the world has flown to me.

## MODERN BEAUTY

I am the torch, she saith, and what to me
If the moth die of me? I am the flame
Of beauty, and I burn that all may see
Beauty, and I have neither joy nor shame,
But live with that clear light of perfect fire
Which is to men the death of their desire.

I am Yseult and Helen. I have seen
Troy burn, and the most loving knight lie dead.
The world has been my mirror, time has been
My breath upon the glass; and men have said,
Age after age, in rapture and despair,
Love's poor few words before my image there.

I live, and am immortal; in my eyes
The sorrow of the world, and on my lips
The joy of life, mingle to make me wise;
Yet now the day is darkened with eclipse:
Who is there still lives for beauty? Still am I
The torch, but where's the moth that still dares die?

## THE CRYING OF WATER

O water, voice of my heart, crying in the sand,
All night long crying with a mournful cry,
As I lie and listen, and cannot understand
The voice of my heart in my side or the voice of the sea,
O water crying for rest, is it I, is it I?
All night long the water is crying to me.

Unresting water, there shall never be rest
Till the last moon drop and the last tide fail,
And the fire of the end begin to burn in the west;
And the heart shall be weary and wonder and cry like the sea,
All life long crying without avail,
As the water all night long is crying to me.

## NIGHT

The night's held breath,
And the stars' steady eyes:
Is it sleep, is it death,
In the earth, in the skies?

In my heart of hope,
In my restless will,
There is that should not stop
Though the earth stood still,

Though the heavens shook aghast,
As the frost shakes a tree,
And a strong wind cast
The stars in the sea.

## WANDERER'S SONG

I have had enough of women, and enough of love,
But the land waits, and the sea waits, and day and night is enough;
Give me a long white road, and the gray wide path of the sea,
And the wind's will and the bird's will, and the heart-ache still in me.

Why should I seek out sorrow, and give gold for strife?
I have loved much and wept much, but tears and love are not life;
The grass calls to my heart, and the foam to my blood cries up,
And the sun shines and the road shines, and the wine's in the cup.

I have had enough of wisdom, and enough of mirth,
For the way's one and the end's one, and it's soon to the ends
of the earth;
And it's then good-night and to bed, and if heels or heart ache,
Well, it's sound sleep and long sleep, and sleep too deep to
wake.

### DURING MUSIC

The music had the heat of blood,
A passion no words can reach;
We sat together, and understood
Our own heart's speech.

We had no need of word or sign,
The music spoke for us, and said
All that her eyes could read in mine
Or mine in hers had read.

### NERVES

The modern malady of love is nerves.
Love, once a simple madness, now observes
The stages of his passionate disease,
And is twice sorrowful because he sees,
Inch by inch entering, the fatal knife.
O health of simple minds, give me your life,
And let me for one midnight cease to hear
The clock forever ticking in my ear,
The clock that tells the minutes in my brain
It is not love, nor love's despair, this pain
That shoots a witless, keener pang across
The simple agony of love and loss.
Nerves, nerves! O folly of a child who dreams
Of heaven and, waking in the darkness, screams.

## WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Born at Sandymount, Ireland, in 1865, the son of John B. Yeats, the Irish artist, the greater part of William Butler Yeats' childhood was spent in the wild district of Sligo. Here he became imbued with the power and richness of native folk-lore; he drank in

the racy quality through quaint fairy stories and old wives' tales of the Irish peasantry. (Later he published a collection of these same stories.) He was educated at Godolphin School, Hammersmith, and Erasmus Smith School, Dublin, and devoted much of his student life to the study of art.

It was in the activities of a "Young Ireland" society that Yeats became identified with the new spirit; he dreamed of a national poetry that would be written in simple English and yet would be definitely Irish. In a few years he became one of the leaders in the Celtic revival, among his associates being J. M. Synge, Douglas Hyde, George Moore and Lady Gregory. He worked incessantly for the cause, both as propagandist and playwright; and, though his mysticism at times seemed the product of a cult, his symbolic dramas were acknowledged to be full of a personal spirituality. (See Preface.) *The Hour Glass* (1904), his second volume of plays, includes his best one-act dramas with the exception of *The Land of Heart's Desire* (1894). His collected dramas were published in one volume, *Plays for an Irish Theatre,* in 1913 and a later, larger collected edition in 1923.

Others who followed Yeats intensified the Irish drama; they established a closer contact between the peasant and poet. No one, however, had so great a part in the actual shaping of modern drama in Ireland as Yeats. His *Deirdre* (1907), a beautiful retelling of the great Gaelic legend, is far more dramatic than the earlier plays; it is particularly interesting to read as a complement to Synge's more idiomatic play on the same theme, *Deirdre of the Sorrows.*

It was as a lyricist, however, that Yeats began his career, his first printed work being *Mosada, A Poem,* a rare booklet of which less than one hundred copies were issued in 1886. But it was with *The Countess Kathleen and Various Legends and Lyrics* (1892) that Yeats became a prominent figure in the Irish Renaissance. Since that date, he has published more than forty volumes of prose, plays and poetry, although he spends more time than any writer, with the possible exception of George Moore, revising and rewriting his work. None of his books are without his particular beauty, a transformation of old themes into a personal music; all of them are enriched by the turns of a mind both philosophic and fanciful. If one had to select only a few of these lavish volumes, the choice would probably be the early *Poems* (1895), *The Wind Among the Reeds* (1899), *Poems 1899-1905, The Wild Swans at Coole* (1917) and *Later Poems* (1922). A definitive *Collected Works* in six volumes was published by The Macmillan Company in 1924. This age has produced few lyrics more haunting than Yeats', few indeed as musical as those here reprinted.

"The Lake Isle of Innisfree," "The Song of Wandering Aengus," "The Rose of the World" are a few contemporary poems which have attained the permanence of folksongs. Nor is the later work less memorable. Modernity has produced no more vivid sonnet than the seemingly classic "Leda and the Swan."

Although Yeats evolved a highly original poetry, his work was strongly influenced, the influences, strangely combined, being particularly evident in his early work. His poems owe something to Blake, more to the French Symbolists; his plays show an obvious indebtedness to Maeterlinck and even to Ibsen. But while Yeats continually yielded to magnetic tremors, the point of his art swung to the true north. That north was within himself. More than any of his compatriots, Yeats accomplished "a more subtle rhythm, a more organic form." He perfected a music which, not essentially Gaelic, has come to be regarded as more characteristic than the Irish melodies of such latter-day harpers as Mangan, Gerald Griffin and their fellows.

Yeats's later books are less concerned with the wanderings of Oisin, Gaelic gods and ghouls, shadowy waters, and symbols too arbitrary to have more than specialized significance. He has sacrificed a certain melodic vagueness and gained intellectual clarity. *The Tower* (1928) in verse and *The Cutting of an Agate* (1919) in prose represent the maturer Yeats, the artist who has exchanged musical impalpability for linear values and an almost architectural solidity.

### THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

## AEDH WISHES FOR THE CLOTHS OF HEAVEN

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half-light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

## THE SONG OF WANDERING AENGUS

I went out to the hazel wood,
Because a fire was in my head,
And cut and peeled a hazel wand,
And hooked a berry to a thread,
And when white moths were on the wing,
And moth-like stars were flickering out,
I dropped the berry in a stream
And caught a little silver trout.

When I had laid it on the floor
I went to blow the fire a-flame,
But something rustled on the floor,
And some one called me by my name:
It had become a glimmering girl
With apple blossoms in her hair
Who called me by my name and ran
And faded through the brightening air.

Though I am old with wandering
Through hollow lands and hilly lands,
I will find out where she has gone,
And kiss her lips and take her hands;
And walk among long dappled grass,
And pluck till time and times are done,
The silver apples of the moon,
The golden apples of the sun.

## THE INDIAN UPON GOD

I passed along the water's edge below the humid trees,
My spirit rocked in evening light, the rushes round my knees,
My spirit rocked in sleep and sighs; and saw the moorfowl pace
All dripping on a grassy slope, and saw them cease to chase
Each other round in circles, and heard the eldest speak:
*Who holds the world between His bill and made us strong or weak*
*Is an undying moorfowl, and He lives beyond the sky.*
*The rains are from His dripping wing, the moonbeams from His eye.*
I passed a little further on and heard a lotus talk:
*Who made the world and ruleth it, He hangeth on a stalk,*
*For I am in His image made, and all this tinkling tide*
*Is but a sliding drop of rain between His petals wide.*
A little way within the gloom a roebuck raised his eyes
Brimful of starlight, and he said: *The Stamper of the Skies,*
*He is a gentle roebuck; for how else, I pray, could He*
*Conceive a thing so sad and soft, a gentle thing like me?*
I passed a little further on and heard a peacock say:
*Who made the grass and made the worms and made my feathers gay,*
*He is a monstrous peacock, and He waveth all the night*
*His languid tail above us, lit with myriad spots of light.*

## AEDH TELLS OF THE ROSE IN HIS HEART

All things uncomely and broken, all things worn out and old,
The cry of a child by the roadway, the creak of a lumbering cart,
The heavy steps of the plowman, splashing the wintry mold,
Are wronging your image that blossoms a rose in the deeps of my heart.

The wrong of unshapely things is a wrong too great to be told;
I hunger to build them anew and sit on a green knoll apart,
With the earth and the sky and the water, remade, like a casket of gold
For my dreams of your image that blossoms a rose in the deeps of my heart.

## FAIRY SONG

(*From "The Land of Heart's Desire"*)

The wind blows out of the gates of day,
The wind blows over the lonely heart,
And the lonely of heart is withered away,
While the faëries dance in a place apart,
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring,
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air:
For they hear the wind laugh, and murmur and sing
Of a land where even the old are fair,
And even the wise are merry of tongue;
But I heard a reed of Coolaney say,
"When the wind has laughed and murmured and sung,
The lonely of heart is withered away!"

## WHEN YOU ARE OLD

When you are old and gray and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

## THE CAP AND BELLS

A Queen was beloved by a jester,
  And once when the owls grew still
He made his soul go upward
  And stand on her window sill.

In a long and straight blue garment,
  It talked before morn was white,
And it had grown wise by thinking
  Of a footfall hushed and light.

But the young queen would not listen;
  She rose in her pale nightgown,
She drew in the brightening casement
  And pushed the brass bolt down.

He bade his heart go to her,
  When the bats cried out no more,
In a red and quivering garment
  It sang to her through the door.

The tongue of it sweet with dreaming
  Of a flutter of flower-like hair,
But she took up her fan from the table
  And waved it off on the air.

"I've cap and bells," he pondered,
  "I will send them to her and die."
And as soon as the morn had whitened
  He left them where she went by.

She laid them upon her bosom,
  Under a cloud of her hair,
And her red lips sang them a love song.
  The stars grew out of the air.

She opened her door and her window,
  And the heart and the soul came through,
To her right hand came the red one,
  To her left hand came the blue.

They set up a noise like crickets,
  A chattering wise and sweet,
And her hair was a folded flower,
  And the quiet of love her feet.

## AN OLD SONG RESUNG[1]

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;
She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

## THE ROSE OF THE WORLD

Who dreamed that beauty passes like a dream?
For these red lips, with all their mournful pride,
Mournful that no new wonder may betide,
Troy passed away in one high funeral gleam,
And Usna's children died.

We and the laboring world are passing by:
Amid men's souls, that waver and give place,
Like the pale waters in their wintry race,
Under the passing stars, frame of the sky,
Lives on this lonely face.

Bow down, archangels, in your dim abode:
Before you were, or any hearts to beat,
Weary and kind, one lingered by His seat;
He made the world to be a grassy road
Before her wandering feet.

## THE SONG OF THE OLD MOTHER

I rise in the dawn, and I kneel and blow
Till the seed of the fire flicker and glow.
And then I must scrub, and bake, and sweep,
Till stars are beginning to blink and peep;
But the young lie long and dream in their bed
Of the matching of ribbons, the blue and the red,

[1] "This," Yeats wrote in a footnote in one of the early editions, "is an extension of three lines sung to me by an old woman of Ballisodare."

And their day goes over in idleness,
And they sigh if the wind but lift up a tress.
While I must work, because I am old
And the seed of the fire gets feeble and cold.

## THE WILD SWANS AT COOLE

The trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky;
Upon the brimming water among the stones
Are nine and fifty swans.

The nineteenth Autumn has come upon me
Since I first made my count;
I saw, before I had well finished,
All suddenly mount
And scatter, wheeling, in great broken rings
Upon their clamorous wings.

I have looked upon those brilliant creatures,
And now my heart is sore.
All's changed since I, hearing at twilight,
The first time on this shore,
The bell-beat of their wings above my head,
Trod with a lighter tread.

Unwearied still, lover by lover,
They paddle in the cold,
Companionable streams or climb the air;
Their hearts have not grown old;
Passion or conquest, wander where they will,
Attend upon them still.

But now they drift on the still water
Mysterious, beautiful;
Among what rushes will they build,
By what lake's edge or pool
Delight men's eyes, when I awake some day
To find they have flown away?

### LEDA AND THE SWAN

A sudden blow: the great wings beating still
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed
By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How can those terrified vague fingers push
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs?
And how can body, laid in that white rush,
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?

A shudder in the loins engenders there
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower
And Agamemnon dead.
Being so caught up,
So mastered by the brute blood of the air,
Did she put on his knowledge with his power
Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?

## HERBERT TRENCH

(Frederic) Herbert Trench was born in November, 1865, at Avoncore, County Cork, Ireland. He was educated at Haileybury and Oxford, became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and was Director of Special Enquiries at the Board of Education, from which he retired in 1908. After his extensive travels, he decided "to risk everything on literature," although he was at one time Director of the Haymarket Theatre. He died in July, 1923.

Although the greater part of his work is an attempt to scale profound heights, his poetry in "the grand manner" is rarely impressive; it is noble in intention but ineffectual as communication. Trench's all too frequent excursions into the realm of the metaphysical achieved far less than a few of his unambitious lyrics. Rid of his nebular philosophy, the shorter verses shine with a natural clarity. "I Heard a Soldier," "Song" and three or four others deserve more than passing patronization for their happy harmonies.

The best of Trench may be found in *Deirdre Wedded* (1900) and *Lyrics and Narrative Poems* (1911). *Selected Poems* as well as *The Complete Works of Herbert Trench*, edited by Harold Williams, were published in 1924.

## I HEARD A SOLDIER

I heard a soldier sing some trifle
  Out in the sun-dried veldt alone.
He lay and cleaned his grimy rifle
  Idly, behind a stone.

"If after death, love, comes a waking,
  And in their camp so dark and still
The men of dust hear bugles, breaking
  Their halt upon the hill,

"To me the slow and silver pealing
  That then the last high trumpet pours,
Shall softer than the dawn come stealing,
  For, with its call, comes yours!"

What grief of love had he to stifle,
  Basking so idly by his stone,
That grimy soldier with his rifle
  Out in the veldt, alone?

## SONG

She comes not when Noon is on the roses—
    Too bright is Day.
She comes not to the soul till it reposes
    From work and play.

But when Night is on the hills, and the great voices
    Roll in from sea,
By starlight and by candlelight and dreamlight
    She comes to me.

## COME, LET US MAKE LOVE DEATHLESS

Come, let us make love deathless, thou and I,
  Seeing that our footing on earth is brief—
Seeing that her multitudes sweep out to die
  Mocking at all that passes their belief.

For standard of our love not theirs we take:
If we go hence today
Fill the high cup that is so soon to break
With richer wine than they!

Aye, since beyond these walls no heavens there be
Joy to revive or wasted youth repair,
I'll not bedim the lovely flame in thee
Nor sully the sad splendor that we wear.
Great be the love, if with the lover dies
Our greatness past recall,
And nobler for the fading of those eyes
The world seen once for all.

## RUDYARD KIPLING

Born at Bombay, India, December 30, 1865 (Joseph) Rudyard Kipling was educated at the United Services College in England. He returned, however, to India and took a position on the staff of *The Lahore Civil and Military Gazette*, writing for the Indian press until about 1890, when he went to England, where, with the exception of a short sojourn in America, he has lived ever since. Even while he was still in India, he achieved a popular as well as a literary success with his dramatic tales and high-spirited ballads of Anglo-Indian life.

*Soldiers Three* (1888) was the first of six collections of short stories brought out in "Wheeler's Railway Library." They were followed by the more sensitive *Plain Tales from the Hills, Under the Deodars* and *The Phantom 'Rikshaw*, which contains two of the best and most convincing ghost-stories in recent literature.

These tales, however, display only one side of Kipling's extraordinary talents. As a writer of children's stories, he has few living equals. *Wee Willie Winkie*, which contains that stirring, heroic fragment "Drums of the Fore and Aft," is only a trifle less delightful than his more obviously juvenile collections. *Just-So Stories* and the two *Jungle Books* (prose interspersed with lively rhymes) are for young people of all ages. *Kim*, the novel of a super-Mowgli grown up, is a more mature canvas painted against the background of the great Indian roads.

Considered solely as a poet (see Preface), Kipling is one of the most vigorous figures of his time. The spirit of romance surges under his realities. His brisk lines conjure up a countryside in autumn, the tingle of salt spray, the rude sentiment of ruder na-

tures, the snapping of a banner, the lurch and rumble of the sea. His poetry is woven of the stuff of myths, but it never loses its hold on actualities. Kipling himself in his poem "The Benefactors" (from *The Years Between* [1919]) writes:

> Ah! What avails the classic bent
> And what the cultured word,
> Against the undoctored incident
> That actually occurred?

What attracted the average reader to Kipling was this attitude to the world's work. Where others sang of lilies and leisure, Kipling celebrated difficulties, duty, hard labor; where others evoked Greek nymphs, he hailed bridge-builders, engineers, sweating stokers—all those who exulted in the job. If he sometimes lost his head in a general hurrahing, his high spirits carried off specious prophesying and brought sing-song meters to a pitch of excitement. Gusto was not the least of his gods.

Kipling won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907. His varied poems were collected in a remarkable one-volume *Inclusive Edition* (1885-1918), an indispensable part of any student's library. Subsequent to this collection, a new volume, *The Years Between,* was published in 1919.

The best and worst of Kipling are obvious to the least critical reader. His worst is inherent in a heartiness which is too loud and too prolonged, a vehemence which changes robustiousness into rowdiness. Max Beerbohm excoriated this Kipling in the cartoon showing an irate little man, helmeted and spectacled, blowing a tin trumpet, waving a Union Jack, and dancing himself into a paroxysm of patriotic fury. This Kipling, overcome by the conquering chauvinism of the Colonist, loses his sense of values, belittling the weak to the tune of British imperialism. The tune, one must admit, is an attractive one, and even those who object to its burden of bombast have learned to whistle it by heart. The rhythms are often the beat of journalistic verse, but they communicate to the "average man" something he seeks and which he would not recognize in finer measures. It is indisputable that Kipling too often tries to force beauty in a rape of violence. But there are also those poems in which, as T. Earle Welby says in *A Popular History of English Poetry*, "he has been humbler and more passive, and in which beauty is a voluntary captive. One emotion has never failed to inspire him, the inverted nostalgia of the man returned home and yearning for far and once familiar scenes of exile. It arouses all the poet in him, puts wistfulness into his generally brazen music, clears his style of semi-Biblical claptrap, and sets his extraordinary descriptive talent to work more legitimately

than usual." Such a descriptive talent is illustrated by "Mandalay," "Fuzzy Wuzzy," "Chant-Pagan," "The Return," even by such a stanza as:

Rivers at night that cluck an' jeer,
  Plains which the moonshine turns to sea,
Mountains which never let you near,
  An' stars to all eternity;
An' the quick-breathin' dark that fills
  The 'ollows of the wilderness,
When the wind worries through the 'ills—
  These may 'ave taught me more or less.

Such work shows that Kipling, though a poet, is something beside a poet. He is not merely a writer for those who enjoy writing, but the singer of those who have never risen to an appreciation of song. A people's balladist, he has composed a dozen songs which are the popular classics of today and the folk-tunes of tomorrow.

### GUNGA DIN

You may talk o' gin an' beer
When you're quartered safe out 'ere,
An' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot it;
But when it comes to slaughter
You will do your work on water,
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im that's got it.
Now in Injia's sunny clime,
Where I used to spend my time
A-servin' of 'Er Majesty the Queen,
Of all them black-faced crew
The finest man I knew
Was our regimental *bhisti,*[1] Gunga Din.

  It was "Din! Din! Din!
  You limping lump o' brick-dust, Gunga Din!
  Hi! *slippy hitherao!*
  Water, get it! *Panee lao!*[2]
  You squidgy-nosed old idol, Gunga Din!"

The uniform 'e wore
Was nothin' much before,

[1] The *bhisti,* or water-carrier, attached to regiments in India, is often one of the most devoted of the Queen's servants. He is also appreciated by the men.

[2] Bring water swiftly.

An' rather less than 'arf o' that be'ind,
For a twisty piece o' rag
An' a goatskin water-bag
Was all the field-equipment 'e could find.
When the sweatin' troop-train lay
In a sidin' through the day,
Where the 'eat would make your bloomin' eyebrows crawl,
We shouted "*Harry By!*" [1]
Till our throats were bricky-dry,
Then we wopped 'im 'cause 'e couldn't serve us all.

It was "Din! Din! Din!
You 'eathen, where the mischief 'ave you been?
You put some *juldee* [2] in it,
Or I'll *marrow* [3] you this minute,
If you don't fill up my helmet, Gunga Din!"

'E would dot an' carry one
Till the longest day was done,
An' 'e didn't seem to know the use o' fear.
If we charged or broke or cut,
You could bet your bloomin' nut,
'E'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear.
With 'is *mussick* [4] on 'is back,
'E would skip with our attack,
An' watch us till the bugles made "Retire."
An' for all 'is dirty 'ide,
'E was white, clear white, inside
When 'e went to tend the wounded under fire!

It was "Din! Din! Din!
With the bullets kickin' dust-spots on the green.
When the cartridges ran out,
You could 'ear the front-files shout:
"Hi! ammunition-mules an' Gunga Din!"

I sha'n't forgit the night
When I dropped be'ind the fight

[1] Tommy Atkins' equivalent for "O Brother!"
[2] Speed.
[3] Hit you.
[4] Water-skin.

With a bullet where my belt-plate should 'a' been.
I was chokin' mad with thirst,
An' the man that spied me first
Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga Din.
'E lifted up my 'ead,
An' 'e plugged me where I bled,
An' 'e guv me 'arf-a-pint o' water—green;
It was crawlin' an' it stunk,
But of all the drinks I've drunk,
I'm gratefulest to one from Gunga Din.

It was "Din! Din! Din!
'Ere's a beggar with a bullet through 'is spleen;
'E's chawin' up the ground an' 'e's kickin' all around:
For Gawd's sake, git the water, Gunga Din!"

'E carried me away
To where a *dooli* lay,
An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar clean.
'E put me safe inside,
An' just before 'e died:
"I 'ope you liked your drink," sez Gunga Din.
So I'll meet 'im later on
In the place where 'e is gone—
Where it's always double drill and no canteen;
'E'll be squattin' on the coals
Givin' drink to pore damned souls,
An' I'll get a swig in Hell from Gunga Din!

Din! Din! Din!
You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din!
Tho' I've belted you an' flayed you,
By the livin' Gawd that made you,
You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din!

## THE RETURN[1]

Peace is declared, and I return
To 'Ackneystadt, but not the same;
Things 'ave transpired which made me learn
The size and meanin' of the game.

[1] From *The Five Nations*. Copyright by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

I did no more than others did,
I don't know where the change began;
I started as a average kid,
I finished as a thinkin' man.

*If England was what England seems*
*An' not the England of our dreams,*
*But only putty, brass, an' paint,*
*'Ow quick we'd drop 'er!* But she ain't!

Before my gappin' mouth could speak
I 'eard it in my comrade's tone;
I saw it on my neighbor's cheek
Before I felt it flush my own.
An' last it come to me—not pride,
Nor yet conceit, but on the 'ole
(If such a term may be applied),
The makin's of a bloomin' soul.

Rivers at night that cluck an' jeer,
Plains which the moonshine turns to sea,
Mountains that never let you near,
An' stars to all eternity;
An' the quick-breathin' dark that fills
The 'ollows of the wilderness,
When the wind worries through the 'ills—
These may 'ave taught me more or less.

Towns without people, ten times took,
An' ten times left an' burned at last;
An' starvin' dogs that come to look
For owners when a column passed;
An' quiet, 'omesick talks between
Men, met by night, you never knew
Until—'is face—by shellfire seen—
Once—an' struck off. They taught me, too.

The day's lay-out—the mornin' sun
Beneath your 'at-brim as you sight;
The dinner-'ush from noon till one,
An' the full roar that lasts till night;

An' the pore dead that look so old
An' was so young an hour ago,
An' legs tied down before they're cold—
These are the things which make you know.

Also Time runnin' into years—
A thousand Places left be'ind—
An' Men from both two 'emispheres
Discussin' things of every kind;
So much more near than I 'ad known,
So much more great than I 'ad guessed—
An' me, like all the rest, alone—
But reachin' out to all the rest!

So 'ath it come to me—not pride,
Nor yet conceit, but on the 'ole
(If such a term may be applied)
The makin's of a bloomin' soul.
But now, discharged, I fall away
To do with little things again. . . .
Gawd, 'oo knows all I cannot say,
Look after me in Thamesfontein!

*If England was what England seems*
*An' not the England of our dreams,*
*But only putty, brass, an' paint,*
*'Ow quick we'd chuck 'er!* But she ain't!

## THE CONUNDRUM OF THE WORKSHOPS

When the flush of a newborn sun fell first on Eden's green and gold,
Our father Adam sat under the Tree and scratched with a stick in the mold;
And the first rude sketch that the world had seen was joy to his mighty heart,
Till the Devil whispered behind the leaves: "It's pretty, but is it Art?"

Wherefore he called to his wife and fled to fashion his work anew—
The first of his race who cared a fig for the first, most dread review;

And he left his lore to the use of his sons—and that was a glorious gain
When the Devil chuckled: "Is it Art?" in the ear of the branded Cain.

They builded a tower to shiver the sky and wrench the stars apart,
Till the Devil grunted behind the bricks: "It's striking, but is it Art?"
The stone was dropped by the quarry-side, and the idle derrick swung,
While each man talked of the aims of art, and each in an alien tongue.

They fought and they talked in the north and the south, they talked and they fought in the west,
Till the waters rose on the jabbering land, and the poor Red Clay had rest—
Had rest till the dank blank-canvas dawn when the dove was preened to start,
And the Devil bubbled below the keel: "It's human, but is it Art?"

The tale is old as the Eden Tree—as new as the new-cut tooth—
For each man knows ere his lip-thatch grows he is master of Art and Truth;
And each man hears as the twilight nears, to the beat of his dying heart,
The Devil drum on the darkened pane: "You did it, but was it Art?"

We have learned to whittle the Eden Tree to the shape of a surplice-peg,
We have learned to bottle our parents twain in the yolk of an addled egg,
We know that the tail must wag the dog, as the horse is drawn by the cart;
But the Devil whoops, as he whooped of old: "It's clever, but is it Art?"

When the flicker of London's sun falls faint on the club-room's
green and gold,
The sons of Adam sit them down and scratch with their pens
in the mold—
They scratch with their pens in the mold of their graves, and
the ink and the anguish start
When the Devil mutters behind the leaves: "It's pretty, but is
it Art?"

Now, if we could win to the Eden Tree where the four great
rivers flow,
And the wreath of Eve is red on the turf as she left it long
ago,
And if we could come when the sentry slept, and softly scurry
through,
By the favor of God we might know as much—as our father
Adam knew.

## AN ASTROLOGER'S SONG[1]

To the Heavens above us
Oh, look and behold
The Planets that love us
All harnessed in gold!
What chariots, what horses
Against us shall bide
While the Stars in their courses
Do fight on our side?

All thought, all desires,
That are under the sun,
Are one with their fires,
As we also are one:
All matter, all spirit,
All fashion, all frame,
Receive and inherit
Their strength from the same.

[1] From *Actions and Reactions.* Copyright by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

(Oh, man that deniest
All power save thine own,
Their power in the highest
Is mightily shown.
Not less in the lowest
That power is made clear.
Oh, man, if thou knowest,
What treasure is here!)

Earth quakes in her throes
And we wonder for why!
But the blind planet knows
When her ruler is nigh;
And, attuned since Creation
To perfect accord,
She thrills in her station
And yearns to her Lord.

The waters have risen,
The springs are unbound—
The floods break their prison,
And ravin around.
No rampart withstands 'em,
Their fury will last,
Till the Sign that commands 'em
Sinks low or swings past.

Through abysses unproven
And gulfs beyond thought,
Our portion is woven,
Our burden is brought.
Yet They that prepare it,
Whose Nature we share,
Make us who must bear it
Well able to bear.

Though terrors o'ertake us
We'll not be afraid.
No power can unmake us
Save that which has made.

Nor yet beyond reason
  Or hope shall we fall—
All things have their season,
  And Mercy crowns all!

Then doubt not, ye fearful—
  The Eternal is King—
Up, heart, and be cheerful,
  And lustily sing:—
*What chariots, what horses*
  *Against us shall bide*
*While the Stars in their courses*
  *Do fight on our side?*

## RECESSIONAL

God of our fathers, known of old,
  Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
  Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;
  The captains and the kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
  An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away;
  On dune and headland sinks the fire:
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
  Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
  Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
  Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard,
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And, guarding, calls not Thee to guard,
For frantic boast and foolish word—
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!

## DANNY DEEVER

"What are the bugles blowin' for?" said Files-on-Parade.
"To turn you out, to turn you out," the Color-Sergeant said.
"What makes you look so white, so white?" said Files-on-Parade.
"I'm dreadin' what I've got to watch," the Color-Sergeant said.
For they're hangin' Danny Deever, you can 'ear the Dead March play,
The regiment's in 'ollow square—they're hangin' him today;
They've taken of his buttons off an' cut his stripes away,
An' they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What makes the rear-rank breathe so 'ard?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's bitter cold, it's bitter cold," the Color-Sergeant said.
"What makes that front-rank man fall down?" says Files-on-Parade.
"A touch of sun, a touch of sun," the Color-Sergeant said.
They are hangin' Danny Deever, they are marchin' of 'im round.
They 'ave 'alted Danny Deever by 'is coffin on the ground:
An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a sneakin' shootin' hound—
O they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'!

"'Is cot was right-'and cot to mine," said Files-on-Parade.
"'E's sleepin' out an' far tonight," the Color-Sergeant said.
"I've drunk 'is beer a score o' times," said Files-on-Parade.
"'E's drinkin' bitter beer alone," the Color-Sergeant said.

They are hangin' Danny Deever, you must mark 'im to 'is place,
For 'e shot a comrade sleepin'—you must look 'im in the face;
Nine 'undred of 'is county an' the regiment's disgrace,
While they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What's that so black agin the sun?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's Danny fightin' 'ard for life," the Color-Sergeant said.
"What's that that whimpers over'ead?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's Danny's soul that's passin' now," the Color-Sergeant said.
For they're done with Danny Deever, you can 'ear the quickstep play,
The regiment's in column, an' they're marchin' us away;
Ho! the young recruits are shakin', an' they'll want their beer today,
After hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

## MANDALAY

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', an' I know she thinks o' me;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, an' the temple-bells they say:
"Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to Mandalay!"
Come you back to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay:
Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon to Mandalay?
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay!

'Er petticut was yaller an' 'er little cap was green,
An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-let—jes' the same as Theebaw's Queen,
An' I seed her fust a-smokin' of a whackin' white cheroot,
An' a-wastin' Christian kisses on an 'eathen idol's foot:

Bloomin' idol made o' mud—
What they called the Great Gawd Budd—
Plucky lot she cared for idols when I kissed 'er where she stud!
On the road to Mandalay—

When the mist was on the rice-fields an' the sun was droppin' slow,
She'd git 'er little banjo an' she'd sing "*Kulla-lo-lo!*"
With 'er arm upon my shoulder an' her cheek agin my cheek
We useter watch the steamers an' the *hathis* pilin' teak.
Elephints a-pilin' teak
In the sludgy, squdgy creek,
Where the silence 'ung that 'eavy you was 'arf afraid to speak!
On the road to Mandalay—

But that's all shove be'ind me—long ago an' fur away,
An' there ain't no 'busses runnin' from the Benk to Mandalay;
An' I'm learnin' 'ere in London what the ten-year sodger tells:
"If you've 'eard the East a-callin', why, you won't 'eed nothin' else."
No! you won't 'eed nothin' else
But them spicy garlic smells
An' the sunshine an' the palm-trees an' the tinky temple bells!
On the road to Mandalay—

I am sick o' wastin' leather on these gritty pavin'-stones,
An' the blasted Henglish drizzle wakes the fever in my bones;
Tho' I walks with fifty 'ousemaids outer Chelsea to the Strand,
An' they talks a lot o' lovin', but wot do they understand?
Beefy face an' grubby 'and—
Law! wot *do* they understand?
I've a neater, sweeter maiden in a cleaner, greener land!
On the road to Mandalay—

Ship me somewheres east of Suez where the best is like the worst,
Where there aren't no Ten Commandments, an' a man can raise a thirst;

For the temple-bells are callin', an' it's there that I would be—
By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' lazy at the sea—
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay,
With our sick beneath the awnings when we went to Mandalay!
Oh, the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay!

## "FUZZY-WUZZY"

(*Soudan Expeditionary Force*)

We've fought with many men acrost the seas,
An' some of 'em was brave an' some was not:
The Paythan an' the Zulu an' Burmese;
But the Fuzzy was the finest o' the lot.
We never got a ha'porth's change of 'im:
'E squatted in the scrub an' 'ocked our 'orses,
'E cut our sentries up at Sua*kim*,
An' 'e played the cat an' banjo with our forces.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in the Sowdan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-class fightin' man;
We gives you your certifikit, an' if you want it signed
We'll come an' 'ave a romp with you whenever you're inclined.

We took our chanst among the Kyber 'ills,
The Boers knocked us silly at a mile,
The Burman guv us Irriwaddy chills,
An' a Zulu *impi* dished us up in style:
But all we ever got from such as they
Was pop to what the Fuzzy made us swaller;
We 'eld our bloomin' own, the papers say,
But man for man the Fuzzy knocked us 'oller.

Then 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' the missis and the kid;
Our orders was to break you, an' of course we went an' did.
We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it wasn't 'ardly fair;
But for all the odds agin you, Fuzzy-Wuz, you bruk the square.

'E 'asn't got no papers of 'is own,
'E 'asn't got no medals nor rewards,
So we must certify the skill 'e's shown
In usin' of 'is long two-'anded swords;
When 'e's 'oppin' in an' out among the bush
With 'is coffin-'eaded shield an' shovel-spear,
A 'appy day with Fuzzy on the rush
Will last a 'ealthy Tommy for a year.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' your friends which is no more,
If we 'adn't lost some messmates we would 'elp you to deplore;
But give an' take's the gospel, an' we'll call the bargain fair,
For if you 'ave lost more than us, you crumpled up the square!

'E rushes at the smoke when we let drive,
An', before we know, 'e's 'ackin' at our 'ead;
'E's all 'ot sand an' ginger when alive,
An' 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.
'E's a daisy, 'e's a ducky, 'e's a lamb!
'E's a injia-rubber idiot on the spree,
'E's the on'y thing that doesn't care a damn
For the Regiment o' British Infantree.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in the Sowdan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-class fightin' man;
An' 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with your 'ayrick 'ead of 'air—
You big black boundin' beggar—for you bruk a British square.

## EVARRA AND HIS GODS

*Read here,*
*This is the story of Evarra—man—*
*Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.*
Because the city gave him of her gold,
Because the caravans brought turquoises,
Because his life was sheltered by the King,
So that no man should maim him, none should steal,
Or break his rest with babble in the streets
When he was weary after toil, he made
An image of his God in gold and pearl,
With turquoise diadem and human eyes,
A wonder in the sunshine, known afar
And worshiped by the King; but, drunk with pride,
Because the city bowed to him for God,
He wrote above the shrine: "*Thus Gods are made,*
*And whoso makes them otherwise shall die.*"
And all the city praised him. . . . Then he died.

*Read here the story of Evarra—man—*
*Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.*
Because his city had no wealth to give,
Because the caravans were spoiled afar,
Because his life was threatened by the King,
So that all men despised him in the streets,
He hacked the living rock, with sweat and tears,
And reared a God against the morning-gold,
A terror in the sunshine, seen afar,
And worshiped by the King; but, drunk with pride,
Because the city fawned to bring him back,
He carved upon the plinth: "*Thus Gods are made,*
*And whoso makes them otherwise shall die.*"
And all the people praised him. . . . Then he died.

*Read here the story of Evarra—man—*
*Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.*
Because he lived among the simple folk,
Because his village was between the hills,
Because he smeared his cheeks with blood of ewes,
He cut an idol from a fallen pine,

Smeared blood upon its cheeks, and wedged a shell
Above its brow for eye, and gave it hair
Of trailing moss, and plaited straw for crown.
And all the village praised him for his craft,
And brought him butter, honey, milk, and curds.
Wherefore, because the shoutings drove him mad,
He scratched upon that log: *"Thus Gods are made,*
*And whoso makes them otherwise shall die."*
And all the people praised him. . . . Then he died.

*Read here the story of Evarra—man—*
*Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.*
Because his God decreed one clot of blood
Should swerve a hair's-breadth from the pulse's path,
And chafe his brain, Evarra mowed alone,
Rag-wrapped, among the cattle in the fields,
Counting his fingers, jesting with the trees,
And mocking at the mist, until his God
Drove him to labor. Out of dung and horns
Dropped in the mire he made a monstrous God,
Abhorrent, shapeless, crowned with plantain tufts.
And when the cattle lowed at twilight-time,
He dreamed it was the clamor of lost crowds,
And howled among the beasts: *"Thus Gods are made,*
*And whoso makes them otherwise shall die."*
Thereat the cattle bellowed . . . Then he died.

Yet at the last he came to Paradise,
And found his own four Gods, and that he wrote;
And marveled, being very near to God,
What oaf on earth had made his toil God's law,
Till God said, mocking: "Mock not. These be thine."
Then cried Evarra: "I have sinned!"—"Not so.
If thou hadst written otherwise, thy Gods
Had rested in the mountain and the mine,
And I were poorer by four wondrous Gods,
And thy more wondrous law, Evarra. Thine,
Servant of shouting crowds and lowing kine."
Thereat with laughing mouth, but tear-wet eyes,
Evarra cast his Gods from Paradise.

*This is the story of Evarra—man—*
*Maker of Gods in lands beyond the sea.*

## THE LADIES[1]

I've taken my fun where I've found it;
I've rogued an' I've ranged in my time;
I've 'ad my pickin' o' sweet'earts,
An' four o' the lot was prime.
One was an 'arf-caste widow,
One was a woman at Prome,
One was the wife of a *jemadar-sais*,[2]
An' one is a girl at 'ome.

*Now I aren't no 'and with the ladies,*
*For, takin' 'em all along,*
*You never can say till you've tried 'em,*
*An' then you are like to be wrong.*
*There's times when you'll think that you mightn't,*
*There's times when you'll know that you might;*
*But the things you will learn from the Yellow an' Brown,*
*They'll 'elp you a lot with the White!*

I was a young un at 'Oogli,
Shy as a girl to begin;
Aggie de Castrer she made me,
An' Aggie was clever as sin;
Older than me, but my first un—
More like a mother she were—
Showed me the way to promotion an' pay,
An' I learned about women from 'er!

Then I was ordered to Burma,
Actin' in charge o' Bazar,
An' I got me a tiddy live 'eathen
Through buyin' supplies off 'er pa.
Funny an' yellow an' faithful—
Doll in a teacup she were,
But we lived on the square, like a true-married pair,
An' I learned about women from 'er!

[1] From *The Seven Seas*. Copyright by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.
[2] Head-groom.

Then we was shifted to Neemuch
(Or I might ha' been keepin' 'er now),
An' I took with a shiny she-devil,
The wife of a nigger at Mhow;
Taught me the gypsy-folks' *bolee;* [1]
Kind o' volcano she were,
For she knifed me one night 'cause I wished she was white,
And I learned about women from 'er!

Then I come 'ome in the trooper,
'Long of a kid o' sixteen—
Girl from a convent at Meerut,
The straightest I ever 'ave seen.
Love at first sight was 'er trouble,
*She* didn't know what it were;
An' I wouldn't do such, 'cause I liked 'er too much,
But—I learned about women from 'er!

I've taken my fun where I've found it,
An' now I must pay for my fun,
For the more you 'ave known o' the others
The less you will settle to one;
An' the end of it's sittin' and thinkin',
An' dreamin' Hell-fires to see;
So be warned by my lot (which I know you will not),
An' learn about women from me!

*What did the Colonel's Lady think?*
*Nobody never knew.*
*Somebody asked the Sergeant's wife,*
*An' she told 'em true!*
*When you get to a man in the case,*
*They're like as a row of pins—*
*For the Colonel's Lady an' Judy O'Grady*
*Are sisters under their skins!*

[1] Slang.

## BOOTS[1]

*(Infantry Columns of the Earlier War)*

We're foot—slog—slog—slog—sloggin' over Africa!
Foot—foot—foot—foot—sloggin' over Africa—
(Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down again!)
There's no discharge in the war!

Seven—six—eleven—five—nine-an'-twenty mile today—
Four—eleven—seventeen—thirty-two the day before—
(Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down again!)
There's no discharge in the war!

Don't—don't—don't—don't—look at what's in front of you
(Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down again);
Men—men—men—men—men go mad with watchin' 'em,
An' there's no discharge in the war!

Try—try—try—try—to think o' something different—
Oh—my—God—keep—me from goin' lunatic!
(Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down again!)
There's no discharge in the war!

Count—count—count—count—the bullets in the bandoliers;
If—your—eyes—drop—they will get atop o' you
(Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down again,)—
There's no discharge in the war!

We—can—stick—out—'unger, thirst, an' weariness,
But—not—not—not the chronic sight of 'em—
Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down again,
An' there's no discharge in the war!

'Tain't—so—bad—by—day because o' company,
But night—brings—long—strings o' forty thousand million
Boots—boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down again.
There's no discharge in the war!

[1] From *The Five Nations*. Copyright by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

I—'ave—marched—six—weeks in 'Ell an certify
It—is—not—fire—devils dark or anything
But boots—boots—boots, movin' up an' down again,
An' there's no discharge in the war!

## THE LAST CHANTEY[1]

*"And there was no more sea"*

Thus said the Lord in the Vault above the Cherubim,
Calling to the Angels and the Souls in their degree:
"Lo! Earth has passed away
On the smoke of Judgment Day.
That Our word may be established shall We gather up the sea?"

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners:
"Plague upon the hurricane that made us furl and flee!
But the war is done between us,
In the deep the Lord hath seen us—
Our bones we'll leave the barracout', and God may sink the sea!"

Then said the soul of Judas that betrayed Him:
"Lord, hast Thou forgotten Thy covenant with me?
How once a year I go
To cool me on the floe?
And Ye take my day of mercy if Ye take away the sea."

Then said the soul of the Angel of the Off-shore Wind:
(He that bits the thunder when the bull-mouthed breakers flee):
"I have watch and ward to keep
O'er Thy wonders on the deep,
And Ye take mine honor from me if Ye take away the sea!"

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners:
"Nay, but we were angry, and a hasty folk are we.
If we worked the ship together
Till she foundered in foul weather,
Are we babes that we should clamor for a vengeance on the sea?"

[1] From *The Seven Seas*. Copyright by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

Then said the souls of the slaves that men threw overboard:
"Kenneled in the picaroon a weary band were we;
But Thy arm was strong to save,
And it touched us on the wave,
And we drowsed the long tides idle till Thy Trumpets tore the sea."

Then cried the soul of the stout Apostle Paul to God:
"Once we frapped a ship, and she labored woundily.
There were fourteen score of these,
And they blessed Thee on their knees,
When they learned Thy Grace and Glory under Malta by the sea!"

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners,
Plucking at their harps, and they plucked unhandily:
"Our thumbs are rough and tarred,
And the tune is something hard—
May we lift a Deepsea Chantey such as seamen use at sea?"

Then said the souls of the gentlemen-adventurers—
Fettered wrist to bar all for red iniquity:
"Ho, we revel in our chains
O'er the sorrow that was Spain's;
Heave or sink it, leave or drink it, we were masters of the sea!"

Up spake the soul of a gray Gothavn 'speckshioner—
(He that led the flenching in the fleets of fair Fundee):
"Oh, the ice-blink white and near,
And the bowhead breaching clear!
Will Ye whelm them all for wantonness that wallow in the sea?"

Loud sang the souls of the jolly, jolly mariners,
Crying: "Under Heaven, here is neither lead nor lea!
Must we sing for evermore
On the windless, glassy floor?
Take back your golden fiddles and we'll beat to open sea!"

Then stooped the Lord, and He called the good sea up to Him,
And 'stablished its borders unto all eternity,
That such as have no pleasure
For to praise the Lord by measure,
They may enter into galleons and serve Him on the sea.

*Sun, Wind, and Cloud shall fail not from the face of it,*
*Stinging, ringing spindrift, nor the fulmar flying free;*
*And the ships shall go abroad*
*To the Glory of the Lord*
*Who heard the silly sailor-folk and gave them back their sea!*

## SESTINA OF THE TRAMP-ROYAL[1]

Speakin' in general, I 'ave tried 'em all—
The 'appy roads that take you o'er the world.
Speakin' in general, I 'ave found them good
For such as cannot use one bed too long,
But must get 'ence, the same as I 'ave done,
An' go observin' matters till they die.

What do it matter where or 'ow we die,
So long as we've our 'ealth to watch it all—
The different ways that different things are done,
An' men an' women lovin' in this world;
Takin' our chances as they come along,
An' when they ain't, pretendin' they are good?

In cash or credit—no, it aren't no good;
You 'ave to 'ave the 'abit or you'd die,
Unless you lived your life but one day long,
Nor didn't prophesy nor fret at all,
But drew your tucker some'ow from the world,
An' never bothered what you might ha' done.

But, Gawd, what things are they I 'aven't done!
I've turned my 'and to most, an' turned it good,
In various situations round the world—
For 'im that doth not work must surely die;
But that's no reason man should labor all
'Is life on one same shift—life's none so long.

[1] From *The Seven Seas*. Copyright by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

Therefore, from job to job I've moved along.
Pay couldn't 'old me when my time was done,
For something in my 'ead upset it all,
Till I 'ad dropped whatever 't was for good,
An' out at sea, be'eld the dock-lights die,
An' met my mate—the wind that tramps the world!

It's like a book, I think, this bloomin' world,
Which you can read and care for just so long,
But presently you feel that you will die
Unless you get the page you're readin' done,
An' turn another—likely not so good;
But what you're after is to turn 'em all.

Gawd bless this world! Whatever she 'ath done—
Excep' when awful long—I've found it good.
So write, before I die, " 'E liked it all!"

## DORA SIGERSON SHORTER

Dora Mary Sigerson (Shorter) was born at Richmond Terrace, Dublin, Ireland, August 16, 1866. Her childhood was spent in Ireland and her life there bubbled with the subdued stir of Irish politics and the fermentation of the intellectual circles of which her father, Dr. Sigerson, was a leader. Her marriage to the Englishman, Clement Shorter, removed her homestead from Ireland, but not her heart, it being claimed that the massacres of 1916 were indirectly responsible for her death. Her nostalgia is expressed in a poem, "Ireland," of which the first and last verses are:

'Twas the dream of a God,
And the mold of His hand,
That you shook 'neath His stroke,
That you trembled and broke
To this beautiful land.

* * * *

I have left you behind
In the path of the past,
With the white breath of flowers,
With the best of God's hours,
I have left you at last.

She was said to have been as rich in beauty as in charm, a charm that pervades her verse and much of her other writings.

Francis Thompson, Meredith and Masefield, all praised her Irish stories, Meredith saying that she was "the best ballad writer since Sir Walter Scott." Her bibliography credits her with eighteen volumes, including novels, fairy-tales, stories, reminiscences and poems. Of the poems the best two volumes are the early *Ballads and Poems* and the later *Sixteen Dead Men and Other Poems of Easter Week*. She died January 6, 1918.

Although she has waned in popular esteem, her loss of popularity seems regrettable. Never a great poet, her verse is instinct with feeling and is written in straightforward syntax that should not suffer from its timeliness.

### THE SEA-MEW

I had loved the pretty birds that by my window sung,—
The gentle thrush that had his nest the perfumed pines among;
The chaffinch with his sudden note, his song so clear and bold;
The sad rhyme of the robin, too, that came when winds grew cold;

The happy lark whose benison fell from the sunny sky;
The blackbird with his golden lute that serenaded by;
The nightingale that through the night told his low rosary;
The finches, with their little tunes, were all beloved by me.

I leaned to hear each lovely note through each enchanted day!
And thought no minstrelsy so fine, while all content I lay,
When to my ear, across the sky, I heard a sea-bird's scream,
And flapping slow across the blue, I saw him flash and gleam.

I cared not then for singing birds, I loved the sun no more.
I heard the plashing of the waves upon a far-off shore,
And lonely, lonely cried my heart in answer to its call—
Ah, best I held the sea-mew's note that had no song at all!

## "Æ"

George William Russell was born April 10, 1867, in the small town of Lurgan, County Armagh, Ireland. At sixteen he studied painting in the School of Art in Dublin, becoming the close friend of W. B. Yeats and, later, James Stephens. While working as an

accountant in a draper's establishment, he read much in Oriental mystical literature, becoming the leader of a small theosophical group. At that time he wrote an article for *The Irish Theosophist* under the pseudonym "Æon" but the compositor omitted the two last letters and the piece appeared under the diphthong "Æ," a pen-name which Russell adopted and used ever since.

In 1897 he became active in Irish politics. For several years he devoted himself to establishing coöperative societies, aiding rural communities, editing (in 1904) *The Irish Homestead* and (in 1923) *The Irish Statesman.*

With maturity he cultivated all his gifts, alternating and sometimes combining the rôles of sociologist, public speaker, poet, painter and propagandist. His landscapes have the misty-mystical color of his poems, which, unconcerned with issues of agrarianism or, for that matter, any other problem, are serene in their otherworldliness. "Continuity" and "The Secret" embody his faith *in petto.*

The best of his poetry is in *Homeward Songs by the Way* (1894) and *The Earth Breath and Other Poems* (1897). Yeats has spoken of these poems as "revealing in all things a kind of scented flame consuming them from within." *Collected Poems,* including later work, appeared in 1914. A more recent collection, *Mid-Summer Eve* (1928) contains only twelve poems, but its spirit is moving and stamped with authenticity. It is the clear expression of one who is not so much God-fearing as God-loving.

### THE GREAT BREATH

Its edges foamed with amethyst and rose,
Withers once more the old blue flower of day:
There where the ether like a diamond glows,
Its petals fade away.

A shadowy tumult stirs the dusky air;
Sparkle the delicate dews, the distant snows;
The great deep thrills—for through it everywhere
The breath of Beauty blows.

I saw how all the trembling ages past,
Molded to her by deep and deeper breath,
Near'd to the hour when Beauty breathes her last
And knows herself in death.

## FROLIC

The children were shouting together
And racing along the sands,
A glimmer of dancing shadows,
A dovelike flutter of hands.

The stars were shouting in heaven,
The sun was chasing the moon:
The game was the same as the children's,
They danced to the self-same tune.

The whole of the world was merry,
One joy from the vale to the height,
Where the blue woods of twilight encircled
The love-lawns of the light.

## THE SECRET

One thing in all things have I seen:
One thought has haunted earth and air:
Clangor and silence both have been
Its palace chambers. Everywhere

I saw the mystic vision flow
And live in men and woods and streams,
Until I could no longer know
The dream of life from my own dreams.

Sometimes it rose like fire in me
Within the depths of my own mind,
And spreading to infinity,
It took the voices of the wind:

It scrawled the human mystery—
Dim heraldry—on light and air;
Wavering along the starry sea
I saw the flying vision there.

Each fire that in God's temple lit
Burns fierce before the inner shrine,
Dimmed as my fire grew near to it
And darkened at the light of mine.

At last, at last, the meaning caught—
The Spirit wears its diadem;
It shakes its wondrous plumes of thought
And trails the stars along with them.

## THE UNKNOWN GOD

Far up the dim twilight fluttered
Moth-wings of vapor and flame:
The lights danced over the mountains,
Star after star they came.

The lights grew thicker unheeded,
For silent and still were we;
Our hearts were drunk with a beauty
Our eyes could never see.

## CONTINUITY

No sign is made while empires pass,
The flowers and stars are still His care,
The constellations hid in grass,
The golden miracles in air.

Life in an instant will be rent,
Where death is glittering blind and wild—
The Heavenly Brooding is intent
To that last instant on Its child.

It breathes the glow in brain and heart,
Life is made magical. Until
Body and spirit are apart,
The Everlasting works Its will.

In that wild orchid that your feet
In their next falling shall destroy,
Minute and passionate and sweet
The Mighty Master holds His joy.

Though the crushed jewels droop and fade,
The Artist's labors will not cease,
And of the ruins shall be made
Some yet more lovely masterpiece.

Richard Le Gallienne, who, in spite of his long residence in the United States, must be considered an English poet, was born at Liverpool in 1867. He entered on a business career soon after leaving Liverpool College, but, after five or six years, gave up commercial life to become a man of letters.

His early work was strongly influenced by the artificialities of the esthetic movement (see Preface); the indebtedness to Oscar Wilde is especially evident. A little later, Keats was the dominant influence, and *English Poems* (1892) betray how deep and well-nigh undermining were Le Gallienne's admirations. His more recent poems in *The Lonely Dancer* (1913) show a keener individuality. His prose fancies are well known—particularly *The Book Bills of Narcissus* and the high-spirited fantasia, *The Quest of the Golden Girl. The Junkman and Other Poems* appeared in 1921.

Le Gallienne came to America about 1905 and, engaging in spasmodic journalism, has lived ever since in Rowayton, Conn., and New York City.

## A BALLAD OF LONDON

Ah, London! London! our delight,
Great flower that opens but at night,
Great City of the midnight sun,
Whose day begins when day is done.

Lamp after lamp against the sky
Opens a sudden beaming eye,
Leaping alight on either hand,
The iron lilies of the Strand.

Like dragonflies, the hansoms hover,
With jeweled eyes, to catch the lover;
The streets are full of lights and loves,
Soft gowns, and flutter of soiled doves.

The human moths about the light
Dash and cling close in dazed delight,
And burn and laugh, the world and wife,
For this is London, this is life!

Upon thy petals butterflies,
But at thy root, some say, there lies
A world of weeping trodden things,
Poor worms that have not eyes or wings.

From out corruption of their woe
Springs this bright flower that charms us so,
Men die and rot deep out of sight
To keep this jungle-flower bright.

Paris and London, World-Flowers twain
Wherewith the World-Tree blooms again,
Since Time hath gathered Babylon,
And withered Rome still withers on.

Sidon and Tyre were such as ye,
How bright they shone upon the tree!
But Time hath gathered, both are gone,
And no man sails to Babylon.

### REGRET

One asked of regret,
  And I made reply:
To have held the bird,
  And let it fly;
To have seen the star
  For a moment nigh,
And lost it
  Through a slothful eye;
To have plucked the flower
  And cast it by;
To have one only hope—
  To die.

## ERNEST DOWSON

Ernest Dowson was born at Belmont Hill in Kent, August 2, 1867. His great-uncle was Alfred Domett (Browning's "Waring"), one time Prime Minister of New Zealand. Dowson, practically an invalid all his life, lived intermittently in London, Paris, Normandy and on the Riviera. He was reckless with himself and, as

disease weakened him more and more, hid in miserable surroundings; for almost two years he lived in sordid supper-houses known as "cabmen's shelters."

He formed only one passion but that one was final and devastating. He fell in love with a restaurant-keeper's daughter, paid court to her with the most delicate reserve, and she—impatient alike of his words and his reticences—married a waiter. The shock to Dowson was profound. He grew more and more withdrawn, even his contacts with fellow-members of the Rhymers' Club became slighter. He sank into despondency and dissipation; he literally drank himself to death.

Dowson's delicate and fantastic poetry was an attempt to escape from a reality too brutal for him. He, himself, was his own pitiful "Pierrot of the Minute," throwing "roses, riotously with the throng"—even though the throng ignored him. His passionate lyric, "I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion," a triumph of despair and disillusion, is an outburst in which Dowson epitomized himself. "One of the greatest lyrical poems of our time," writes Arthur Symons; "in it he has for once said everything, and he has said it to an intoxicating and perhaps immortal music."

Yet, in spite of the fact that this familiar poem has been quoted in almost every contemporary collection, several of Dowson's less well-known poems strike a higher and far more resonant note. Among such poems are "Extreme Unction," possibly the finest expression of his Catholicism, and "A Last Word," which expresses his revulsion from the "perverse and aimless band."

Dowson's poems of decadence are no less typical than his religious poems; both, unlike the product of much of his period, are sincere. His mysticism, no less than his idealization of preciosity, is an esthetic one. Unable to find fulfillment in either, he wavered, as C. E. Andrews and M. O. Percival say in *Poetry of the Nineties*, "between heaping garlands upon the altars of Aphrodite and lighting candles to the blessed Virgin."

Dowson died obscure in 1900, one of the least effectual but one of the most gifted of modern minor poets. His life was a tragedy of a weak nature buffeted by a strong and merciless environment. His poetry, highly special but never specious, survives.

## A LAST WORD

Let us go hence: the night is now at hand;
The day is overworn, the birds all flown;
And we have reaped the crops the gods have sown;
Despair and death; deep darkness o'er the land,

Broods like an owl; we cannot understand
  Laughter or tears, for we have only known
  Surpassing vanity: vain things alone
Have driven our perverse and aimless band.

Let us go hence, somewhither strange and cold,
  To Hollow Lands where just men and unjust
  Find end of labor, where's rest for the old,
Freedom to all from love and fear and lust.
Twine our torn hands! O pray the earth enfold
Our life-sick hearts and turn them into dust.

## NON SUM QUALIS ERAM BONAE SUB REGNO CYNARAE

Last night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine
There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
  Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm heart beat,
Night-long within mine arms in love and sleep she lay;
Surely the kisses of her bought red mouth were sweet;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
  When I awoke and found the dawn was gray:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I have forgot much, Cynara! gone with the wind,
Flung roses, roses riotously with the throng,
Dancing, to put thy pale, lost lilies out of mind;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
  Yea, all the time, because the dance was long:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I cried for madder music and for stronger wine,
But when the feast is finished and the lamps expire,
Then falls thy shadow, Cynara! the night is thine;
And I am desolate and sick of an old passion,
  Yea, hungry for the lips of my desire:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

## SPLEEN

I was not sorrowful, I could not weep,
And all my memories were put to sleep.

I watched the river grow more white and strange,
All day till evening I watched it change.

All day till evening I watched the rain
Beat wearily upon the window-pane.

I was not sorrowful, but only tired
Of everything that ever I desired.

Her lips, her eyes, all day became to me
The shadow of a shadow utterly.

All day mine hunger for her heart became
Oblivion, until the evening came.

And left me sorrowful, inclined to weep,
With all my memories that could not sleep.

## TO ONE IN BEDLAM

With delicate, mad hands, behind his sordid bars,
Surely he hath his posies, which they tear and twine;
Those scentless wisps of straw that, miserable, line
His strait, caged universe, whereat the dull world stares.

Pedant and pitiful. O, how his rapt gaze wars
With their stupidity! Know they what dreams divine
Lift his long, laughing reveries like enchanted wine,
And make his melancholy germane to the stars?

O lamentable brother! if those pity thee,
Am I not fain of all thy lone eyes promise me;
Half a fool's kingdom, far from men who sow and reap,
All their days, vanity? Better than mortal flowers,
Thy moon-kissed roses seem: better than love or sleep,
The star-crowned solitude of thine oblivious hours!

## EXTREME UNCTION

Upon the eyes, the lips, the feet,
  On all the passages of sense,
The atoning oil is spread with sweet
  Renewal of lost innocence.

The feet, that lately ran so fast
  To meet desire, are soothly sealed;
The eyes that were so often cast
  On vanity, are touched and healed.

From troublous sights and sounds set free;
  In such a twilight hour of breath
Shall one retrace his life, or see
  Through shadows the true face of death?

Vials of mercy! Sacring oils!
  I know not where nor when I come,
Nor through what wanderings and toils,
  To crave of you Viaticum.

Yet, when the walls of flesh grow weak,
  In such an hour, it well may be,
Through mist and darkness, light will break,
  And each anointed sense will see!

## "YOU WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD ME"

You would have understood me had you waited;
  I could have loved you, dear! as well as he:
Had we not been impatient, dear! and fated
      Always to disagree.

What is the use of speech? Silence were fitter:
  Lest we should still be wishing things unsaid.
Though all the words we ever spake were bitter,
      Shall I reproach you, dead?

Nay, let this earth, your portion, likewise cover
  All the old anger, setting us apart:
Always, in all, in truth was I your lover;
      Always, I held your heart.

I have met other women who were tender,
As you were cold, dear! with a grace as rare.
Think you, I turned to them, or made surrender,
I who had found you fair?

Had we been patient, dear! ah, had you waited,
I had fought death for you, better than he:
But from the very first, dear! we were fated
Always to disagree.

Late, late, I come to you, now death discloses
Love that in life was not to be our part:
On your low lying mound between the roses,
Sadly I cast my heart.

I would not waken you: nay! this is fitter;
Death and the darkness give you unto me;
Here we who loved so, were so cold and bitter,
Hardly can disagree.

### ENVOY

(*Vitae summa brevis spem nos vetat incohare longam*)

They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,
Love and desire and hate;
I think they have no portion in us after
We pass the gate.

They are not long, the days of wine and roses:
Out of a misty dream
Our path emerges for a while, then closes
Within a dream.

## LIONEL JOHNSON

Born in 1867, at Broadstairs in Kent, Lionel (Pigot) Johnson received a classical education at Oxford, his poetry being a faithful reflection of his studies in Greek and Latin literatures. Though he allied himself with the modern Irish poets, his Celtic origin is a literary myth; Johnson, having been converted to Catholicism in

1891, became imbued with Catholic and, later, with Irish traditions. Yeats, who became his intimate friend, says it was Johnson's habit to sleep all day and read and write all night, the ordinary world about him having no significance to the recluse. "In my library," Johnson said, "I have all the knowledge I need of the world."

Before any of his poetry was collected in a volume, he published a book on *The Art of Thomas Hardy* (1894) which, though written before the appearance of *Jude the Obscure* or *The Dynasts*, remains one of the most sensitive and stimulating studies of Hardy yet written. His verse, published originally among the bizarre novelties of *The Yellow Book*, was curiously cool and removed; he seemed, as one of his associates has said, a young monk surrounded by dancing pagans. "Divine austerity" is the goal to which his verse aspires. While sometimes over-decorated, it is chastely designed, and, like that of the Cavalier poets of the seventeenth century, fiercely devotional.

Johnson was one of the many poets to whom conversion to the Church of Rome supplied not only a new color but a new impetus. It is a subject rich in speculation why this period should have yielded so many artists who turned to the Catholic Church for inspiration in their life and work, among the most eminent converts, besides Johnson, being Alice Meynell, Ernest Dowson, Oscar Wilde, Aubrey Beardsley.

*Poems* (1895) and *Ireland* (1897) were published during his lifetime; a posthumous collection of essays, *Post Liminium*, appeared in 1911. A collected edition of his poems was brought out in 1915. Johnson died tragically in 1902.

## MYSTIC AND CAVALIER

Go from me: I am one of those who fall.
What! hath no cold wind swept your heart at all,
In my sad company? Before the end,
Go from me, dear my friend!

Yours are the victories of light: your feet
Rest from good toil, where rest is brave and sweet:
But after warfare in a mourning gloom,
I rest in clouds of doom.

Have you not read so, looking in these eyes?
Is it the common light of the pure skies
Lights up their shadowy depths? The end is set:
Though the end be not yet.

When gracious music stirs, and all is bright,
And beauty triumphs through a courtly night;
When I too joy, a man like other men:
Yet, am I like them, then?

And in the battle, when the horsemen sweep
Against a thousand deaths, and fall on sleep:
Who ever sought that sudden calm, if I
Sought not? yet could not die!

Seek with thine eyes to pierce this crystal sphere:
Canst read a fate there, prosperous and clear?
Only the mists, only the weeping clouds,
Dimness and airy shrouds.

Beneath, what angels are at work? What powers
Prepare the secret of the fatal hours?
See! the mists tremble, and the clouds are stirred:
When comes the calling word?

The clouds are breaking from the crystal ball,
Breaking and clearing: and I look to fall.
When the cold winds and airs of portent sweep,
My spirit may have sleep.

O rich and sounding voices of the air!
Interpreters and prophets of despair:
Priests of a fearful sacrament! I come
To make with you mine home.

## TO MORFYDD

A voice on the winds,
A voice by the waters,
Wanders and cries:
*Oh! what are the winds?*
*And what are the waters?*
*Mine are your eyes!*

Western the winds are,
And western the waters,
  Where the light lies:
*Oh! what are the winds?*
*And what are the waters?*
  *Mine are your eyes!*

Cold, cold grow the winds,
And wild grow the waters,
  Where the sun dies:
*Oh! what are the winds?*
*And what are the waters?*
  *Mine are your eyes!*

And down the night winds,
And down the night waters,
  The music flies:
*Oh! what are the winds?*
*And what are the waters?*
*Cold be the winds,*
*And wild be the waters,*
  *So mine be your eyes!*

## BY THE STATUE OF KING CHARLES AT CHARING CROSS

Somber and rich, the skies,
Great glooms, and starry plains;
Gently the night wind sighs;
Else a vast silence reigns.

The splendid silence clings
Around me: and around
The saddest of all Kings,
Crown'd, and again discrown'd.

Comely and calm, he rides
Hard by his own Whitehall.
Only the night wind glides:
No crowds, no rebels, brawl.

Gone, too, his Court: and yet,
The stars his courtiers are:
Stars in their stations set;
And every wandering star.

Alone he rides, alone,
The fair and fatal King:
Dark night is all his own,
That strange and solemn thing.

Which are more full of fate:
The stars, or those sad eyes?
Which are more still and great:
Those brows, or the dark skies?

Although his whole heart yearn
In passionate tragedy,
Never was face so stern,
With sweet austerity.

Vanquish'd in life, his death
By beauty made amends:
The passing of his breath
Won his defeated ends.

Brief life and hapless? Nay:
Through death, life grew sublime.
*Speak after sentence?* Yea:
And to the end of time.

Armor'd he rides, his head
Bare to the stars of doom;
He triumphs now, the dead,
Beholding London's gloom.

Our wearier spirit faints,
Vex'd in the world's employ:
His soul was of the saints;
And art to him was joy.

King, tried in fires of woe!
Men hunger for thy grace:
And through the night I go,
Loving thy mournful face.

Yet, when the city sleeps,
When all the cries are still,
The stars and heavenly deeps
Work out a perfect will.

## TO A TRAVELER

The mountains, and the lonely death at last
Upon the lonely mountains: O strong friend!
The wandering over, and the labor passed,
Thou art indeed at rest:
Earth gave thee of her best,
That labor and this end.

Earth was thy mother, and her true son thou:
Earth called thee to a knowledge of her ways,
Upon the great hills, up the great streams: now:
Upon earth's kindly breast
Thou art indeed at rest:
Thou, and thine arduous days.

Fare thee well, O strong heart! The tranquil night
Looks calmly on thee: and the sun pours down
His glory over thee, O heart of might!
Earth gives thee perfect rest:
Earth, whom thy swift feet pressed:
Earth, whom the vast stars crown.

## THE PRECEPT OF SILENCE

I know you: solitary griefs,
Desolate passions, aching hours!
I know you: tremulous beliefs,
Agonized hopes, and ashen flowers!

The winds are sometimes sad to me;
The starry spaces, full of fear:
Mine is the sorrow on the sea,
And mine the sigh of places drear.

Some players upon plaintive strings
Publish their wistfulness abroad:
I have not spoken of these things,
Save to one man, and unto God.

## STEPHEN PHILLIPS

Born in 1868, Stephen Phillips is best known as the author of *Herod* (1900), *Paola and Francesca* (1899), and *Ulysses* (1902); a poetic playwright who succeeded in reviving, for a brief interval, the blank verse drama on the modern stage. Hailed at first with extravagant and incredible praise, likened to Milton and even Shakespeare, Phillips lived to see his most popular dramas discarded and his new ones, such as *Pietro of Siena* (1910), unproduced and unnoticed.

Phillips failed to "restore" poetic drama because he was, first of all, a lyric rather than a dramatic poet. In spite of certain moments of rhetorical splendor, his scenes are spectacular instead of genuinely emotional; his inspiration is too often derived and his highly colored passages bear the same relation to eloquence that paste coronets of the stage bear to crown jewels. As J. C. Squire remarked, reviewing a posthumous play, "Phillips tended to make all his characters minor poets, who were willing at any moment to hang up the play with unrevealing irrelevancies, faintly reminiscent of the great passages in great poets." Still, in his prime, Squire concedes, "with his remarkable gift of serious and unconscious parody, and his instinct for crude effects of situation, he was as near being a good dramatic poet as a man could be without actually being one."

From the late 1890s until about 1905, Phillips was in his heyday. The reversal was sudden and severe. By 1913, Phillips had lost his readers and his fortune. His ambitiously patriotic *Harold* was not published until 1927, twelve years after his death. Even the purple patches had faded to a foggy lavender.

As a lyrical poet, Phillips' reputation shrunk almost as much as his popularity as a dramatist. Yet, in spite of a too ornate, artificial diction, parts of *Marpessa* (1900) and *Lyrics and Dramas* (1913) achieve a ringing if mimetic eloquence.

Phillips died in 1915.

### A DREAM

My dear love came to me, and said:
"God gives me one hour's rest
To spend with thee on earth again:
How shall we spend it best?"

"Why, as of old," I said; and so
We quarreled, as of old:
But, when I turned to make my peace,
That one short hour was told.

### BEAUTIFUL LIE THE DEAD

Beautiful lie the dead;
Clear comes each feature;
Satisfied not to be,
Strangely contented.

Like ships, the anchor dropped,
Furled every sail is;
Mirrored with all their masts
In a deep water.

### TO MILTON—BLIND

He who said suddenly, "Let there be light!"
To thee the dark deliberately gave;
That those full eyes might undistracted be
By this beguiling show of sky and field,
This brilliance, that so lures us from the Truth.
He gave thee back original night, His own
Tremendous canvas, large and blank and free,
Where at each thought a star flashed out and sang.
O blinded with a special lightning, thou
Hadst once again the virgin Dark! and when
The pleasant flowery sight, which had deterred
Thine eyes from seeing, when this recent world
Was quite withdrawn; then burst upon thy view
The elder glory; space again in pangs,
And Eden odorous in the early mist,
That heaving watery plain that *was* the world;

Then the burned earth, and Christ coming in clouds.
Or rather a special leave to thee was given
By the high power, and thou with bandaged eyes
Wast guided through the glimmering camp of God.
Thy hand was taken by angels, who patrol
The evening, or are sentries to the dawn,
Or pace the wide air everlastingly.
Thou wast admitted to the presence, and deep
Argument heardest, and the large design
That brings this world out of the woe to bliss.

## LAURENCE BINYON

(Robert) Laurence Binyon was born at Lancaster, August 10, 1869, a cousin of Stephen Phillips, and was educated at Trinity College, Oxford. He won the Newdigate Prize in 1890, and, collaborating with Phillips, poems by both cousins appeared together the same year in *Primavera.* Binyon's subsequent volumes showed little distinction until he published *London Visions,* which, in an enlarged edition in 1908, revealed a gift of characterization and a turn of speech in surprising contrast to his previous academic *Lyrical Poems* (1894). His *Odes* (1901) contains his ripest work; two poems in particular, "The Threshold" and "The Bacchanal of Alexander," are glowing and unusually spontaneous.

Binyon's talent continued to grow; age gave his verse a new sharpness. Sixty poems were published in *The Secret* (1920), some of which embody all Binyon's dignity with a definiteness which he never before attained. *Selected Poems* (1924) is an excellently arranged sequence which includes Binyon's finest work with the exception of *The Sirens* (1927), the latter being a long, elaborate ode in which the slow-paced rhythms have wide scope.

Since 1893 Binyon has been head of the Department of Printed Books and Deputy Keeper of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum. One volume of his Critical Studies—*English Poetry in its Relation to Painting and the Other Arts* (1919)—is especially rewarding to those interested in the kinship of the arts.

### THE LITTLE DANCERS

Lonely, save for a few faint stars, the sky
Dreams; and lonely, below, the little street
Into its gloom retires, secluded and shy.
Scarcely the dumb roar enters this soft retreat;

And all is dark, save where come flooding rays
From a tavern window; there, to the brisk measure
Of an organ that down in an alley merrily plays,
Two children, all alone and no one by,
Holding their tattered frocks, thro' an airy maze
Of motion lightly threaded with nimble feet
Dance sedately; face to face they gaze,
Their eyes shining, grave with a perfect pleasure.

## O WORLD, BE NOBLER

O world, be nobler, for her sake!
If she but knew thee what thou art,
What wrongs are borne, what deeds are done
In thee, beneath thy daily sun,
Know'st thou not that her tender heart
For pain and very shame would break?
O World, be nobler, for her sake!

## THE HOUSE THAT WAS

Of the old house, only a few crumbled
Courses of brick, smothered in nettle and dock,
Or a squared stone, lying mossy where it tumbled.
Sprawling bramble and saucy thistle mock
What once was firelit floor and private charm
Whence, seen in a windowed picture, were hills fading
At dusk, and all was memory-colored and warm,
And voices talked, secure from the wind's invading.

Of the old garden, only a stray shining
Of daffodil flames amid April's cuckoo-flowers,
Or a cluster of aconite mixt with weeds entwining!
But, dark and lofty, a royal cedar towers
By homely thorns; and whether the white rain drifts
Or sun scorches, he holds the downs in ken,
The western vales; his branchy tiers he lifts,
Older than many a generation of men.

### A SONG

For Mercy, Courage, Kindness, Mirth,
There is no measure upon earth.
Nay, they wither, root and stem,
If an end be set to them.

Overbrim and overflow,
If your own heart you would know;
For the spirit born to bless
Lives but in its own excess.

## CHARLOTTE MEW

Charlotte (Mary) Mew was born in 1870, the daughter of an architect of distinction, who died when she was an infant. Little is generally known of her life except that it was a long struggle not only with poverty but with adversity and private sorrows that finally overcame her. In her late fifties, through the joint efforts of Hardy, De la Mare and Masefield, she was granted a Civil List pension. Though she loved the country, she was forced to live almost continually in London, becoming more and more of a recluse. One of her few excursions was a week-end at Max Gate, where she was the guest of Thomas Hardy who considered her the best woman poet of her day. The death of her mother was a blow from which she never recovered; the death of her sister hastened her end. As Sidney C. Cockerell wrote, "Charlotte and Anne Mew had more than a little in them of what made another Charlotte and Anne, and their sister Emily, what they were. They were indeed like two Brontë sisters reincarnate."

Charlotte Mew died March 24, 1928.

In the obituary note which Sidney Cockerell wrote for the *London Times* few new facts came to light. It was learned that Charlotte Mew wrote much more than was suspected, but "how much she destroyed at house-movings and during periods of overwhelming depression, we shall never know. There can be no doubt that her fastidious self-criticism proved fatal to much work that was really good, and that the printed poems are far less than a tithe of what she composed. These first appeared in various periodicals. In 1916, seventeen of them were collected into a thin volume which was issued by the Poetry Book Shop for a shilling. In 1921 this volume, named *The Farmer's Bride*, after the opening poem, was re-issued with the addition of 11 new poems, 28 in all. Perhaps

not more than another 20 have seen the light. But, although the visible output was so small, the quality was in each case poignant and arresting. These poems are written as though with the life-blood of a noble and passionate heart."

One of Charlotte Mew's first discoverers was Alida Klemantaski (later Mrs. Harold Monro), who was not only responsible for the publication of *The Farmer's Bride* but for the printing of the post-humous poems to which she furnished a Memoir. The first book was brought out in America under the title of *Saturday Market* in 1921. Had Miss Mew printed nothing but the original booklet, it would have been sufficient to rank her among the most distinctive and intense of living poets. Hers is the distillation, the essence of emotion, rather than the stirring up of passion. Her most remarkable work is in dramatic projections and monologues (unfortunately too long to quote) like "The Changeling," with its fantastic pathos, and that powerful meditation, "Madeleine in Church." But lyrics as swift as "Sea Love," or as ageless as "Song," with its simple finality, or as hymn-like as "I Have Been Through the Gates" are equally sure of their place in English literature. They are, in common with all of Charlotte Mew's work, disturbing in their direct beauty; full of a speech that is noble and profound without ever becoming pompous. Apart from her other qualities (not the least of which is her control of an unusually long and extraordinarily flexible line) Miss Mew's work is a series of triumphs in condensation.

"To a Child in Death," a strangely premonitory poem, is one of those given by Charlotte Mew to the editor shortly before her death.

## IN THE FIELDS

Lord, when I look at lovely things which pass,
  Under old trees the shadow of young leaves
Dancing to please the wind along the grass,
  Or the gold stillness of the August sun on the August sheaves;
Can I believe there is a heavenlier world than this?
  And if there is
Will the strange heart of any everlasting thing
  Bring me these dreams that take my breath away?
They come at evening with the home-flying rooks and the scent of hay,
  Over the fields. They come in Spring.

## SEA LOVE

Tide be runnin' the great world over:
'Twas only last June month I mind that we
Was thinkin' the toss and the call in the breast of the lover
So everlastin' as the sea.

Here's the same little fishes that sputter and swim,
Wi' the moon's old glim on the gray, wet sand;
An' him no more to me nor me to him
Than the wind goin' over my hand.

## I HAVE BEEN THROUGH THE GATES

His heart, to me, was a place of palaces and pinnacles and shining towers;
I saw it then as we see things in dreams,—I do not remember how long I slept;
I remember the trees, and the high, white walls, and how the sun was always on the towers;
The walls are standing today, and the gates: I have been through the gates, I have groped, I have crept
Back, back. There is dust in the streets, and blood; they are empty; darkness is over them;
His heart is a place with the lights gone out, forsaken by great winds and the heavenly rain, unclean and unswept,
Like the heart of the holy city, old, blind, beautiful Jerusalem,
Over which Christ wept.

## TO A CHILD IN DEATH

You would have scoffed if we had told you yesterday
Love made us feel—or so it was with me—like some great bird
Trying to hold and shelter you in its strong wing;—
A gay little shadowy smile would have tossed us back such a solemn word,
And it was not for that you were listening
When so quietly you slipped away
With half the music of the world unheard.
What shall we do with this strange Summer, meant for you,—
Dear, if we see the Winter through
What shall be done with Spring—?

This, this is the victory of the grave; here is death's sting.
That it is not strong enough, our strongest wing.

But what of His who like a Father pitieth—?
His Son was also, once, a little thing,
The wistfulest child that ever drew breath,
Chased by a sword from Bethlehem and in the busy house at Nazareth
Playing with little rows of nails, watching the carpenter's hammer swing,
Long years before His hands and feet were tied
And by a hammer and the three great nails He died,
Of youth, of Spring,
Of sorrow, of loneliness, of victory the king,
Under the shadow of that wing.

## SONG

Love, Love today, my dear,
Love is not always here;
Wise maids know how soon grows sere
The greenest leaf of Spring;
But no man knoweth
Whither it goeth
When the wind bloweth
So frail a thing.

Love, Love, my dear, today,
If the ship's in the bay,
If the bird has come your way
That sings on summer trees;
When his song faileth
And the ship saileth
No voice availeth
To call back these.

## THE FARMER'S BRIDE

Three Summers since I chose a maid,
Too young maybe—but more's to do
At harvest-time than bide and woo.
When us was wed she turned afraid

Of love and me and all things human;
Like the shut of a winter's day.
Her smile went out, and 'twasn't a woman—
More like a little frightened fay.
One night, in the Fall, she runned away.

"Out 'mong the sheep, her be," they said,
'Should properly have been abed;
But sure enough she wasn't there
Lying awake with her wide brown stare.
So over seven-acre field and up-along across the down
We chased her, flying like a hare
Before our lanterns. To Church-Town
All in a shiver and a scare
We caught her, fetched her home at last
And turned the key upon her, fast.

She does the work about the house
As well as most, but like a mouse:
Happy enough to chat and play
With birds and rabbits and such as they,
So long as men-folk keep away.
"Not near, not near!" her eyes beseech
When one of us comes within reach.
The women say that beasts in stall
Look round like children at her call.
*I've* hardly heard her speak at all.

Shy as a leveret, swift as he,
Straight and slight as a young larch tree,
Sweet as the first wild violets, she
To her wild self. But what to me?

The short days shorten and the oaks are brown,
The blue smoke rises to the low gray sky,
One leaf in the still air falls slowly down,
A magpie's spotted feathers lie
On the black earth spread white with rime,
The berries redden up to Christmas-time.
What's Christmas-time without there be
Some other in the house than we!

She sleeps up in the attic there
Alone, poor maid. 'Tis but a stair
Betwixt us. Oh! my God! the down,
The soft young down of her, the brown,
The brown of her—her eyes, her hair, her hair . . .

## BESIDE THE BED

Some one has shut the shining eyes, straightened and folded
The wandering hands quietly covering the unquiet breast:
So, smoothed and silenced you lie, like a child, not again to be questioned or scolded:
But, for you, not one of us believes that this is rest.

Not so to close the windows down can cloud and deaden
The blue beyond: or to screen the wavering flame subdue its breath:
Why, if I lay my cheek to your cheek, your gray lips, like dawn, would quiver and redden,
Breaking into the old, odd smile at this fraud of death.

Because all night you have not turned to us or spoken
It is time for you to wake; your dreams were never very deep:
I, for one, have seen the thin bright, twisted threads of them dimmed suddenly and broken.
This is only a most piteous pretense of sleep!

## FROM "MADELEINE IN CHURCH"

. . . . . .

How old was Mary out of whom you cast
So many devils? Was she young or perhaps for years
She had sat staring, with dry eyes, at this and that man going past
Till suddenly she saw You on the steps of Simon's house
And stood and looked at You through tears.
I think she must have known by those
The thing, for what it was that had come to her.
For some of us there is a passion, I suppose
So far from earthly cares and earthly fears
That in its stillness you can hardly stir

Or in its nearness lift your hand,
So great that you have simply got to stand
Looking at it through tears, through tears.
Then straight from these there broke the kiss,
I think You must have known by this
The thing, for what it was that had come to You:
She did not love You like the rest,
It was in her own way, but at the worst, the best,
She gave you something altogether new.
And through it all, from her, no word,
She scarcely saw You, scarcely heard:
Surely You knew when she so touched You with her hair,
Or by the wet cheek lying there,
And while her perfume clung to You from head to feet all through the day
That You can change the things for which we care,
But even You, unless You kill us, not the way.

This then was peace for her, but passion too.
I wonder was it like a kiss that once I knew,
The only one that I would care to take
Into the grave with me, to which if there were afterwards, to wake
Almost as happy as the carven dead
In some dim chancel lying head to head
We slept with it, but face to face, the whole night through—
One breath, one throbbing quietness, as if the thing behind our lips was endless life,
Lost, as I woke, to hear in the strange earthly dawn, his "Are you there?"
And lie still, listening to the wind outside, among the firs.

So Mary chose the dream of Him for what was left to her of night and day.
It is the only truth: it is the dream in us that neither life nor death nor any other thing can take away:
But if she had not touched Him in the doorway of the dream could she have cared so much?
She was a sinner, we are what we are: the spirit afterwards, but first, the touch.

And He has never shared with me my haunted house beneath the trees
Of Eden and Calvary, with its ghosts that have not any eyes for tears,
And the happier guests, who would not see, or if they did, remember these,
Though they lived here a thousand years.
Outside, too gravely looking at me, He seems to stand,
And looking at Him if my forgotten spirit came
Unwillingly back, what could it claim
Of those calm eyes, that quiet speech,
Breaking like a slow tide upon the beach,
The scarred, not quite human hand?—
Unwillingly back to the burden of old imaginings
When it has learned so long not to think, not to be,
Again, again it would speak as it has spoken to me of things
That I shall not see!

## ALFRED DOUGLAS

Lord Alfred Douglas was born in 1870 and educated at Magdalen College, Oxford. He was the editor of *The Academy* from 1907 to 1910 and was at one time the intimate friend of Oscar Wilde. One of the minor poets of "the eighteen-nineties," several of his poems rise above affectation and the end-of-the-century decadence. *The City of the Soul* (1899) and *Sonnets* (1900) contain something more than graceful writing, the latter volume disclosing Douglas's gift of phrase-making and fidelity to form.

The friendship with Oscar Wilde brought contumely upon him socially and depreciation poetically. In 1929 a convincing defense was published, and his *Selected Poems* (reissued in a popular edition in 1926) proved him a far better poet than his more notorious friend. Overshadowed at first, it is evident that Douglas freed himself from specious glamor. "Perkin Warbeck" is a remarkable combination of ballad and dramatic lyric; "Night Coming Out of a Garden" is a memorable lyric; and several of the sonnets illustrate his individuality as well as his enviable command of the structure.

## THE GREEN RIVER

I know a green grass path that leaves the field
And, like a running river, winds along
Into a leafy wood, where is no throng
Of birds at noon-day; and no soft throats yield
Their music to the moon. The place is sealed,
An unclaimed sovereignty of voiceless song,
And all the unravished silences belong
To some sweet singer lost or unrevealed.

So is my soul become a silent place. . . .
Oh, may I wake from this uneasy night
To find some voice of music manifold.
Let it be shape of sorrow with wan face,
Or love that swoons on sleep, or else delight
That is as wide-eyed as a marigold.

## FROM "THE CITY OF THE SOUL"

Each new hour's passage is the acolyte
Of inarticulate song and syllable,
And every passing moment is a bell,
To mourn the death of undiscerned delight.
Where is the sun that made the noon-day bright,
And where the midnight moon? O let us tell,
In long carved line and painted parable,
How the white road curves down into the night.

Only to build one crystal barrier
Against this sea which beats upon our days;
To ransom one lost moment with a rhyme.
Or if fate cries and grudging gods demur,
To clutch Life's hair, and thrust one maked phrase
Like a lean knife between the ribs of Time.

## NIGHT COMING OUT OF A GARDEN

Through the still air of night
Suddenly comes, alone and shrill,
Like the far-off voice of the distant light,
The single piping trill

Of a bird that has caught the scent of the dawn,
  And knows that the night is over;
(She has poured her dews on the velvet lawn
  And drenched the long grass and the clover),
And now with her naked white feet
  She is silently passing away,
Out of the garden and into the street,
Over the long yellow fields of the wheat,
  Till she melts in the arms of the day.
And from the great gates of the East,
  With a clang and a brazen blare,
Forth from the rosy wine and the feast
  Comes the god with flame-flaked hair;
The hoofs of his horses ring
  On the golden stones, and the wheels
Of his chariot burn and sing,
  And the earth beneath him reels;
And forth with a rush and a rout
  His myriad angels run,
And the world is awake with a shout,
  "He is coming! The sun! The sun!"

## THE DEAD POET

I dreamed of him last night, I saw his face
All radiant and unshadowed of distress,
And as of old, in music measureless,
I heard his golden voice and marked him trace
Under the common thing the hidden grace,
And conjure wonder out of emptiness,
Till mean things put on beauty like a dress
And all the world was an enchanted place.

And then methought outside a fast-locked gate
I mourned the loss of unrecorded words,
Forgotten tales and mysteries half said,
Wonders that might have been articulate,
And voiceless thoughts like murdered singing birds.
And so I woke and knew that he was dead.

### SONNET ON THE SONNET

To see the moment holds a madrigal,
To find some cloistered place, some hermitage
For free devices, some deliberate cage
Wherein to keep wild thoughts like birds in thrall,
To eat sweet honey and to taste black gall,
To fight with form, to wrestle and to rage,
Till at the last upon the conquered page
The shadows of created Beauty fall—

This is the sonnet, this is all delight
Of every flower that blows in every Spring,
And all desire of every desert place,
This is the joy that fills a cloudy night
When, bursting from her misty following,
A perfect moon wins to an empty space.

## T. STURGE MOORE

T(homas) Sturge Moore was born at Hastings, March 4, 1870. He is well known not only as an author, but as a critic, wood-engraver, and designer of book-plates. As an artist, he has achieved no little distinction and has designed the covers for the poetry of W. B. Yeats and others. As a poet, the greater portion of his verse is severely classical in tone, academic in expression but, of its kind, distinctive and intimate. Among his many volumes, the most outstanding are *The Vinedresser and Other Poems* (1899), *A Sicilian Idyll* (1911) and *The Sea Is Kind* (1914). *Danaë*, a volume of later poems, was published in 1920. After that date, Moore devoted himself to plays and dialogues: *The Tragic Mothers* (1921), *The Powers of the Air* (1921) and *Judas* (1923).

As critic, Sturge Moore has written works on Correggio, Dürer, Blake and other artists, his prose being as delicately balanced as his verse.

### SILENCE SINGS

So faint, no ear is sure it hears,
So faint and far;
So vast that very near appears
My voice, both here and in each star

Unmeasured leagues do bridge between;
Like that which on a face is seen
Where secrets are;
Sweeping, like veils of lofty balm,
Tresses unbound
O'er desert sand, o'er ocean calm,
I am wherever is not sound;
And, goddess of the truthful face,
My beauty doth instill its grace
That joy abound.

## A DUET

"Flowers nodding gayly, scent in air,
Flowers posied, flowers for the hair,
Sleepy flowers, flowers bold to stare—"
"O pick me some!"

"Shells with lip, or tooth, or bleeding gum,
Tell-tale shells, and shells that whisper *Come*,
Shells that stammer, blush, and yet are dumb—"
"O let me hear."

"Eyes so black they draw one trembling near,
Brown eyes, caverns flooded with a tear,
Cloudless eyes, blue eyes so windy clear—"
"O look at me!"

"Kisses sadly blown across the sea,
Darkling kisses, kisses fair and free,
Bob-a-cherry kisses 'neath a tree—"
"O give me one!"

Thus sang a king and queen in Babylon.

## THE DYING SWAN

O silver-throated Swan,
Struck, struck! A golden dart
Clean through thy breast has gone
Home to thy heart.

Thrill, thrill, O silver throat!
O silver trumpet, pour
Love for defiance back
On him who smote!
And brim, brim o'er
With love; and ruby-dye thy track
Down thy last living reach
Of river, sail the golden light—
Enter the sun's heart—even teach,
O wondrous-gifted Pain, teach Thou
The God of love, let him learn how!

## HILAIRE BELLOC

(Joseph) Hilaire (Pierre) Belloc, who has been described as "a Frenchman, an Englishman, an Oxford man, a country gentleman, a soldier, a satirist, a democrat, a novelist, and a practical journalist," was born near Paris, July 27, 1870. After leaving school he served as a driver in the 8th Regiment of French Artillery at Toul Meurthe-et-Moselle, being at that time a French citizen. He was naturalized as a British subject somewhat later, finished his education at Balliol College, Oxford, and in 1906 entered the House of Commons as Liberal Member for South Salford. He was a member of Parliament from 1906 to 1910.

Besides his other multifarious activities, he was the author (by 1929) of some forty-four volumes. These books range the gamut of literature: from travel-sketches to essays significantly entitled *On Nothing and Kindred Subjects* (1908), *On Everything* (1909), *On Anything* (1910) and simply *On* (1923); from *A Book of Beasts* (1896) to a *History of England,* three volumes of which were published by 1927. He has written several satirical fictions, one of which, *Mr. Clutterbuck's Election* (1908), exposes British underground politics, and which, together with his other work, bristles with what might be termed affable Bellocosity.

Belloc's *Path to Rome* (1902) is a high-spirited travel book which has passed through many editions. His historical studies and biographies of *Robespierre* and *Marie Antoinette* (1909) are classics of their kind. His nonsense-rhymes (*Cautionary Tales, More Beasts for Worse Children*) are comparable to Edward Lear's. As a serious poet, he is somewhat less engaging. His *Verses* (1910) is a rather brief collection of poems on a variety of themes. Although his humorous and burlesque stanzas are refreshing, Belloc is most himself when he writes either of malt liquor or his

beloved Sussex. His religious poems are full of a fine romanticism; "The South Country" and the "Lines to a Don" in defense of his friend Chesterton are the most persuasive of his earnest poems. His poetic as well as spiritual kinship with that other protagonist of a burly Catholicism, G. K. Chesterton, is obvious.

As an agile maker of epigrams, he has few equals, a fact proved by the inclusion of most of his rhymed *bons mots* in Belloc's *Collected Poems* in 1923.

## THE SOUTH COUNTRY

When I am living in the Midlands
That are sodden and unkind,
I light my lamp in the evening:
My work is left behind;
And the great hills of the South Country
Come back into my mind.

The great hills of the South Country
They stand along the sea;
And it's there walking in the high woods
That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Walking along with me.

The men that live in North England
I saw them for a day:
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
Their skies are fast and gray;
From their castle-walls a man may see
The mountains far away.

The men that live in West England
They see the Severn strong,
A-rolling on rough water brown
Light aspen leaves along.
They have the secret of the rocks,
And the oldest kind of song.

But the men that live in the South Country
Are the kindest and most wise,
They get their laughter from the loud surf,
And the faith in their happy eyes

Comes surely from our Sister the Spring
When over the sea she flies;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet,
She blesses us with surprise.

I never get between the pines
But I smell the Sussex air;
Nor I never come on a belt of sand
But my home is there.
And along the sky the line of the Downs
So noble and so bare.

A lost thing could I never find,
Nor a broken thing mend:
And I fear I shall be all alone
When I get towards the end.
Who will there be to comfort me
Or who will be my friend?

I will gather and carefully make my friends
Of the men of the Sussex Weald;
They watch the stars from silent folds,
They stiffly plow the field.
By them and the God of the South Country
My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
Or if ever I grow to be old,
I will build a house with deep thatch
To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood
Within a walk of the sea,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Shall sit and drink with me.

## HA'NACKER MILL

Sally is gone that was so kindly,
  Sally is gone from Ha'nacker Hill.
And the Briar grows ever since then so blindly
  And ever since then the clapper is still,
  And the sweeps have fallen from Ha'nacker Mill.

Ha'nacker Hill is in Desolation:
  Ruin a-top and a field unplowed,
And Spirits that call on a fallen nation,
  Spirits that loved her calling aloud:
  Spirits abroad in a windy cloud.

Spirits that call and no one answers;
  Ha'nacker's down and England's done.
Wind and Thistle for pipe and dancers
  And never a plowman under the Sun.
  Never a plowman. Never a one.

## FOUR BEASTS

### THE BIG BABOON

The Big Baboon is found upon
  The plains of Cariboo;
He goes about with nothing on
  (A shocking thing to do.)
But if he dressed respectably
  And let his whiskers grow
How like this Big Baboon would be
  To Mister So-and-So!

### THE YAK

As a friend to the children commend me the Yak
  You will find it exactly the thing:
It will carry and fetch, you can ride on its back,
  Or lead it about with a string.
The Tartar who dwells on the plains of Thibet
  (A desolate region of snow)
Has for centuries made it a nursery pet,
  And surely the Tartar should know!

Then tell your papa where the Yak can be got,
And if he is awfully rich
He will buy you the creature—or else he will not.
(I cannot be positive which.)

### THE LION

The Lion, the Lion, he dwells in the waste,
He has a big head and a very small waist;
But his shoulders are stark, and his jaws they are grim,
And a good little child will not play with him.

### THE TIGER

The Tiger on the other hand, is kittenish and mild,
He makes a pretty playfellow for any little child;
And mothers of large families (who claim to common sense)
Will find a Tiger well repays the trouble and expense.

## LINES TO A DON

Remote and ineffectual Don
That dared attack my Chesterton,
With that poor weapon, half-impelled,
Unlearnt, unsteady, hardly held,
Unworthy for a tilt with men—
Your quavering and corroded pen;
Don poor at Bed and worse at Table,
Don pinched, Don starved, Don miserable;
Don stuttering, Don with roving eyes,
Don nervous, Don of crudities;
Don clerical, Don ordinary,
Don self-absorbed and solitary;
Don here-and-there, Don epileptic;
Don puffed and empty, Don dyspeptic;
Don middle-class, Don sycophantic,
Don dull, Don brutish, Don pedantic;
Don hypocritical, Don bad,
Don furtive, Don three-quarters mad;
Don (since a man must make an end),
Don that shall never be my friend.

. . . . .

Don different from those regal Dons!
With hearts of gold and lungs of bronze,
Who shout and bang and roar and bawl
The Absolute across the hall,
Or sail in amply bellowing gown
Enormous through the Sacred Town,
Bearing from College to their homes
Deep cargoes of gigantic tomes;
Dons admirable! Dons of Might!
Uprising on my inward sight
Compact of ancient tales, and port
And sleep—and learning of a sort.
Dons English, worthy of the land;
Dons rooted; Dons that understand.
Good Dons perpetual that remain
A landmark, walling in the plain—
The horizon of my memories—
Like large and comfortable trees.

. . . . .

Don very much apart from these,
Thou scapegoat Don, thou Don devoted,
Don to thine own damnation quoted,
Perplexed to find thy trivial name
Reared in my verse to lasting shame.
Don dreadful, rasping Don and wearing,
Repulsive Don—Don past all bearing,
Don of the cold and doubtful breath,
Don despicable, Don of death;
Don nasty, skimpy, silent, level;
Don evil; Don that serves the devil.
Don ugly—that makes fifty lines.
There is a Canon which confines
A Rhymed Octosyllabic Curse
If written in Iambic Verse
To fifty lines. I never cut;
I far prefer to end it—but
Believe me I shall soon return.
My fires are banked, but still they burn
To write some more about the Don
That dared attack my Chesterton.

## SONNET

We will not whisper, we have found the place
Of silence and the endless halls of sleep.
Of that which breathes alone throughout the deep
The end and the beginning; and the face
Between the level brows of whose blind eyes
Lie plenary contentment, full surcease
Of violence, and the passionless long peace
Wherein we lose our human lullabies.

Look up and tell the immeasurable height
Between the vault of the world and your dear head;
That's death, my little sister, and the night
Which was our Mother beckons us to bed,
Where large oblivion in her house is laid
For us tired children, now our games are played.

## SIX EPIGRAMS

### *On Lady Poltagrue, a Public Peril*

The Devil, having nothing else to do,
Went off to tempt My Lady Poltagrue.
My Lady, tempted by a private whim,
To his extreme annoyance, tempted him.

### *On a Dead Hostess*

Of this bad world the loveliest and the best
Has smiled and said "Good Night," and gone to rest.

### *On Hygiene*

Of old when folk lay sick and sorely tried,
The doctors gave them physic, and they died.
But here's a happier age: for now we know
Both how to make men sick and keep them so.

### *On His Books*

When I am dead, I hope it may be said:
"His sins were scarlet, but his books were read."

*Epitaph on the Politician*

Here, richly, with ridiculous display,
The Politician's corpse was laid away.
While all of his acquaintance sneered and slanged,
I wept: for I had longed to see him hanged.

*For False Heart*

I said to Heart, "How goes it?" Heart replied:
"Right as a Ribstone Pippin!" But it lied.

## ANTHONY C. DEANE

Anthony C. Deane was born in 1870 and was the Seatonian prizeman in 1905 at Clare College, Cambridge. He has been Vicar of All Saints, Ennismore Gardens, since 1916. His long list of light verse and essays includes several excellent parodies, the most delightful being found in his *New Rhymes for Old* (1901), a volume undeservedly neglected. Although it is not specifically stated, one suspects "The Ballad of the *Billycock*" of being a parody if not a burlesque of such nautical (and patriotic) ballads as Newbolt's.

### THE BALLAD OF THE *BILLYCOCK*

It was the good ship *Billycock*, with thirteen men aboard,
Athirst to grapple with their country's foes,—
A crew, 'twill be admitted, not numerically fitted
To navigate a battleship in prose.

It was the good ship *Billycock* put out from Plymouth Sound,
While lustily the gallant heroes cheered,
And all the air was ringing with the merry bo'sun's singing,
Till in the gloom of night she disappeared.

But when the morning broke on her, behold, a dozen ships,
A dozen ships of France around her lay
(Or, if that isn't plenty, I will gladly make it twenty),
And hemmed her close in Salamander Bay.

Then to the Lord High Admiral there spake a cabin-boy:
"Methinks," he said, "the odds are somewhat great,
And, in the present crisis, a cabin-boy's advice is
That you and France had better arbitrate!"

"Pooh!" said the Lord High Admiral, and slapped his manly chest,
"Pooh! That would be both cowardly and wrong;
Shall I, a gallant fighter, give the needy ballad-writer
No suitable material for song?"

"Nay—is the shorthand-writer here?—I tell you, one and all,
I mean to do my duty, as I ought;
With eager satisfaction let us clear the decks for action
And fight the craven Frenchmen!" So they fought.

And (after several stanzas which as yet are incomplete,
Describing all the fight in epic style)
When the *Billycock* was going, she'd a dozen prizes towing
(Or twenty, as above) in single file!

Ah, long in glowing English hearts the story will remain,
The memory of that historic day,
And, while we rule the ocean, we will picture with emotion
The *Billycock* in Salamander Bay!

*P.S.*—I've lately noticed that the critics—who, I think,
In praising *my* productions are remiss—
Quite easily are captured, and profess themselves enraptured,
By patriotic ditties such as this,

For making which you merely take some dauntless Englishmen,
Guns, heroism, slaughter, and a fleet—
Ingredients you mingle in a meter with a jingle,
And there you have your masterpiece complete!

Why, then, with labor infinite, produce a book of verse
To languish on the "All for Twopence" shelf?
The ballad bold and breezy comes particularly easy—
I mean to take to writing it myself!

According to his own biography, William Henry Davies was born in a public-house called Church House at Newport, in the County of Monmouthshire, April 20, 1870, of Welsh parents. He was, until Bernard Shaw "discovered" him, a cattleman, a berry-picker, a panhandler—in short, a vagabond. In a preface to Davies' *The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp* (1906), Shaw describes how the manuscript came into his hands:

"In the year 1905 I received by post a volume of poems by one William H. Davies, whose address was The Farm House, Kennington, S.E. I was surprised to learn that there was still a farmhouse left in Kennington; for I did not then suspect that The Farm House, like the Shepherdess Walks and Nightingale Lane and Whetstone Parks of Bethnal Green and Holborn, is so called nowadays in irony, and is, in fact, a doss-house, or hostelry, where single men can have a night's lodging, for, at most, sixpence. . . . The author, as far as I could guess, had walked into a printer's or stationer's shop; handed in his manuscript; and ordered his book as he might have ordered a pair of boots. It was marked 'price, half a crown.' An accompanying letter asked me very civilly if I required a half-crown book of verses; and if so, would I please send the author the half-crown: if not, would I return the book. This was attractively simple and sensible. I opened the book, and was more puzzled than ever; for before I had read three lines I perceived that the author was a real poet. His work was not in the least strenuous or modern; there was indeed no sign of his ever having read anything otherwise than as a child reads. . . . Here, I saw, was a genuine innocent, writing odds and ends of verse about odds and ends of things; living quite out of the world in which such things are usually done, and knowing no better (or rather no worse) than to get his book made by the appropriate craftsman and hawk it round like any other ware."

It is more than likely that Davies' first notoriety as a tramp-poet who had ridden the rails in the United States and had had his right foot cut off by a train in Canada, obscured his merit as a singer. Even his early *The Soul's Destroyer* (1907) revealed that simplicity which is as *naïf* as it is unexpected.

Between 1906, when Davies published his first book, and 1930, the poet issued eighteen volumes, five of autobiography, thirteen of verse. Besides these, there were three different *Collected Poems*, appearing in 1916, 1923, and 1929. The difficulty of keeping track of this verse is the greater since the Welsh-English poet is still in the very flush of fecundity and his continuous output shows no sign of diminishing. *Collected Poems* (1929 edition) contains more than four hundred poems in which good, indifferent

and bad mingle so inextricably that the reader must accept Davies *en masse* or reject him *in toto*. One can no more imagine Davies self-critical than one can imagine him in the labor of creation, his "labor" being about as arduous as a bird's and his song being no less recreational.

The figure is not far-fetched, for no poetry has ever been more obviously bird-like. But, it may be asked with a proper regard for ornithology, what bird? Not the lark, for Davies is no Shelley hurling himself and his cry far above the comfortable altitudes of man. Not the nightingale, for his is not Keats' clear passion nor Swinburne's operatic coloratura. It is the English robin that Davies most resembles or the American goldfinch, whose song, limited in range, is cleanly, sharply pitched. Without the variability of greater singers, his notes are only three or four, but the tones are so cool, the delivery so fresh that we would not exchange the crisp spontaneity even for the versatile brilliance of the hermit-thrush. No less than thirty-three poems begin: "When I in praise of babies speak," "When on a summer morn I wake," "When I came forth this morn I saw," "When I . . ." "When I . . ." "When I . . ."

It is easy enough to deride such naïveté, easy enough to confuse Davies with his compatriots who pipe their placid week-end pastorals. But, although a Georgian in point of time, Davies shakes himself free of "Georgianism," that false simplicity sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thoughtlessness. He does not study his subjects from the outside; it is doubtful if he studies them at all; he is always within his bucolics. Thus his sympathies are as genuine as they are ingenuous. His sense of wonder is as direct, as unmistakable as an untutored child's. He looks at clouds, cowslips, lovely ladies, glow-worms, sheep, dogs, dolls and daisies, as though they had never existed prior to his observation; and he puts them to rhyme as unselfconsciously as though never before had they been employed in verse.

Observe the poem entitled "A Great Time" and note what details prompt his adjective. Beauty to Davies is not in the elaboration but in the mere being; greatness is, therefore, implicit in the coming together of a rainbow and a cuckoo. These are his auguries of innocence, for him, also, "a dog starv'd at his master's gate Predicts the ruin of the State." His rapport with lamb and bat and game-cock may lead us to imply a kinship with Blake, but he is, at the best, a Blake in words of one syllable. Where Blake projects apocalypses and flaming images, Davies offers a panorama of quiet pictures; we drop from passionate vision into pleasant reverie. And if the world is neither as simple nor spontaneous as his homely dream, Davies almost persuades us that it ought to be.

## DAYS TOO SHORT

When primroses are out in Spring,
And small, blue violets come between;
When merry birds sing on boughs green,
And rills, as soon as born, must sing;

When butterflies will make side-leaps,
As though escaped from Nature's hand
Ere perfect quite; and bees will stand
Upon their heads in fragrant deeps;

When small clouds are so silvery white
Each seems a broken rimmèd moon—
When such things are, this world too soon,
For me, doth wear the veil of Night.

## THE MOON

Thy beauty haunts me heart and soul,
O thou fair Moon, so close and bright;
Thy beauty makes me like the child
That cries aloud to own thy light:
The little child that lifts each arm
To press thee to her bosom warm.

Though there are birds that sing this night
With thy white beams across their throats,
Let my deep silence speak for me
More than for them their sweetest notes:
Who worships thee till music fails
Is greater than thy nightingales.

## THE VILLAIN

While joy gave clouds the light of stars,
That beamed where'er they looked;
And calves and lambs had tottering knees,
Excited, while they sucked;
While every bird enjoyed his song,
Without one thought of harm or wrong—

I turned my head and saw the wind,
  Not far from where I stood,
Dragging the corn by her golden hair,
  Into a dark and lonely wood.

## THE EXAMPLE

Here's an example from
  A Butterfly;
That on a rough, hard rock
  Happy can lie;
Friendless and all alone
On this unsweetened stone.

Now let my bed be hard,
  No care take I;
I'll make my joy like this
  Small Butterfly,
Whose happy heart has power
To make a stone a flower.

## THE TWO STARS

Day has her star, as well as Night,
One star is black, the other white.
I saw a white star burn and pant
  And swirl with such a wildness, once—
That I stood still, and almost stared
  Myself into a trance!

The star of Day, both seen and heard,
Is but a little, English bird:
The Lark, whose wings beat time to his
  Wild rapture, sings, high overhead;
When silence comes, we almost fear
  That Earth receives its dead.

## THE DOG

The dog was there, outside her door,
  She gave it food and drink,
She gave it shelter from the cold:

It was the night young Molly robbed
An old fool of his gold.

"Molly," I said, "you'll go to hell—"
And yet I half believed
That ugly, famished, tottering cur
Would bark outside the gates of Heaven,
To open them for Her!

## JENNY WREN

Her sight is short, she comes quite near;
A foot to me's a mile to her;
And she is known as Jenny Wren,
The smallest bird in England. When
I heard that little bird at first,
Methought her frame would surely burst
With earnest song. Oft had I seen
Her running under leaves so green,
Or in the grass when fresh and wet,
As though her wings she would forget.
And, seeing this, I said to her—
"My pretty runner, you prefer
To be a thing to run unheard
Through leaves and grass, and not a bird!"
'Twas then she burst, to prove me wrong,
Into a sudden storm of song;
So very loud and earnest, I
Feared she would break her heart and die.
"Nay, nay," I laughed, "be you no thing
To run unheard, sweet scold, but sing!
O I could hear your voice near me,
Above the din in that oak tree,
When almost all the twigs on top
Had starlings chattering without stop."

## AMBITION

I had Ambition, by which sin
The angels fell;
I climbed and, step by step, O Lord,
Ascended into Hell.

Returning now to peace and quiet,
And made more wise,
Let my descent and fall, O Lord,
Be into Paradise.

## THE HERMIT

What moves that lonely man is not the boom
Of waves that break against the cliff so strong;
Nor roar of thunder, when that traveling voice
Is caught by rocks that carry far along.

'Tis not the groan of oak tree in its prime,
When lightning strikes its solid heart to dust.
Nor frozen pond when, melted by the sun,
It suddenly doth break its sparkling crust.

What moves that man is when the blind bat taps
His window where he sits alone at night;
Or when the small bird sounds like some great beast
Among the dead, dry leaves so frail and light;

Or when the moths on his night-pillow beat
Such heavy blows he fears they'll break his bones;
Or when a mouse inside the papered walls,
Comes like a tiger crunching through the stones.

## WHEN YON FULL MOON

When yon full moon's with her white fleet of stars,
And but one bird makes music in the grove;
When you and I are breathing side by side,
Where our two bodies make one shadow, love;

Not for her beauty will I praise the moon,
But that she lights thy purer face and throat;
The only praise I'll give the nightingale
Is that she draws from thee a richer note.

For, blinded with thy beauty, I am filled,
Like Saul of Tarsus, with a greater light;
When he had heard that warning voice in Heaven,
And lost his eyes to find a deeper sight.

Come, let us sit in that deep silence then,
Launched on love's rapids, with our passions proud,
That makes all music hollow—though the lark
Raves in his windy heights above a cloud.

## SHEEP

When I was once in Baltimore,
A man came up to me and cried,
"Come, I have eighteen hundred sheep,
And we will sail on Tuesday's tide.

"If you will sail with me, young man,
I'll pay you fifty shillings down;
These eighteen hundred sheep I take
From Baltimore to Glasgow town."

He paid me fifty shillings down,
I sailed with eighteen hundred sheep;
We soon had cleared the harbor's mouth,
We soon were in the salt sea deep.

The first night we were out at sea
Those sheep were quiet in their mind;
The second night they cried with fear—
They smelt no pastures in the wind.

They sniffed, poor things, for their green fields,
They cried so loud I could not sleep;
For fifty thousand shillings down
I would not sail again with sheep.

## THE MIND'S LIBERTY

The mind, with its own eyes and ears,
May for these others have no care;
No matter where this body is,
The mind is free to go elsewhere.
My mind can be a sailor, when
This body's still confined to land;
And turn these mortals into trees,
That walk in Fleet Street or the Strand.

So, when I'm passing Charing Cross,
  Where porters work both night and day,
I ofttimes hear sweet Malpas Brook,
  That flows thrice fifty miles away.
And when I'm passing near St. Paul's,
  I see, beyond the dome and crowd,
Twm Barlum, that green pap in Gwent,
  With its dark nipple in a cloud.

## A GREAT TIME

Sweet Chance, that led my steps abroad,
  Beyond the town, where wild flowers grow—
A rainbow and a cuckoo, Lord!
  How rich and great the times are now!
    Know, all ye sheep
    And cows that keep
On staring that I stand so long
  In grass that's wet from heavy rain—
A rainbow and a cuckoo's song
  May never come together again;
    May never come
    This side the tomb.

## THE ELEMENTS

No house of stone
  Was built for me;
When the Sun shines—
  I am a bee.

No sooner comes
  The Rain so warm,
I come to light—
  I am a worm.

When the Winds blow,
  I do not strip,
But set my sails—
  I am a ship.

When Lightning comes,
It plays with me
And I with it—
I am a tree.

When drowned men rise
At Thunder's word,
Sings Nightingale—
I am a bird.

## LEAVES

Peace to these little broken leaves,
That strew our common ground;
That chase their tails, like silly dogs,
As they go round and round.

For though in winter boughs are bare,
Let us not once forget
Their summer glory, when these leaves
Caught the great Sun in their strong net;
And made him, in the lower air,
Tremble—no bigger than a star!

## SONGS OF JOY

Sing out, my Soul, thy songs of joy;
Such as a happy bird will sing
Beneath a Rainbow's lovely arch
In early spring.

Think not of Death in thy young days;
Why shouldst thou that grim tyrant fear,
And fear him not when thou art old,
And he is near.

Strive not for gold, for greedy fools
Measure themselves by poor men never;
Their standards still being richer men,
Makes them poor ever.

Train up thy mind to feel content,
What matters then how low thy store!
What we enjoy, and not possess,
Makes rich or poor.

Filled with sweet thought, then happy I
Take not my state from others' eyes;
What's in my mind—not on my flesh
Or theirs—I prize.

Sing, happy Soul, thy songs of joy;
Such as a Brook sings in the wood,
That all night had been strengthened by
Heaven's purer flood.

## TO A LADY FRIEND

Since you have turned unkind,
Then let the truth be known:
We poets give our praise
To any weed or stone,
Or sulking bird that in
The cold, sharp wind is dumb;
To this, or that, or you—
Whatever's first to come.

You came my way the first,
When the life-force in my blood—
Coming from none knows where—
Had reached its highest flood;
A time when anything,
No matter old or new,
Could bring my song to birth—
Sticks, bones, or rags, or you!

## LEISURE

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

## J. M. SYNGE

John M. Synge, the most brilliant star of the Celtic revival, was born at Rathfarnham, near Dublin, in 1871, his maternal grandfather, Robert Traill, being famous for a splendid translation of Josephus. As a child in Wicklow, Synge was already fascinated by the strange idioms and rhythmic speech he heard there, a native utterance which was his greatest delight and which was rare material for his greatest work. He did not use this folk-language merely as he heard it. He was an artist first, and, as an artist, he bent and shaped the rough matter, selecting with great fastidiousness, so that in his plays every speech is, as he himself declared all good speech should be, "as fully flavored as a nut or apple." Even in *The Tinker's Wedding* (1907), the least important of his plays, Synge's peculiarly inflected sentences vivify every scene; one is arrested by snatches of illuminated prose like:

> "That's a sweet tongue you have, Sarah Casey; but if sleep's a grand thing, it's a grand thing to be waking up a day the like of this, when there's a warm sun in it, and a kind of air, and you'll hear the cuckoos singing and crying out on the top of the hill."

For some time, Synge's career was uncertain. He went to Germany half intending to become a professional musician. There he studied the theory of music, perfecting himself meanwhile in Gaelic and Hebrew, winning prizes in both of these languages. He took up Heine with great interest, familiarized himself with the peasant-dramas of Anzengruber, and was planning to translate the

ballads of the old German minnesingers into Anglo-Irish dialect. Then he went to Paris.

Yeats found him in France in 1898 and advised him to go to the Aran Islands, to live there as if he were one of the people. "Express a life," said Yeats, "that has never found expression." Synge went. He became part of the life of Aran, living upon salt fish and eggs, talking Irish for the most part, but listening also to that beautiful English which, to quote Yeats again, "has grown up in Irish-speaking districts and takes its vocabulary from the time of Malory and of the translators of the Bible, but its idiom and vivid metaphor from Irish." The result of this close contact was five of the greatest poetic prose dramas not only of Synge's own generation, but of several generations preceding it. (See Preface.)

In *Riders to the Sea* (1903), *The Well of the Saints* (1905), and *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907), there is a richness of imagery, a new language startling in its vigor; a wildness and passion that contrast strangely with the suave mysticism and delicate spirituality of the playwright's associates in the Irish Theatre.

Synge's *Poems and Translations* (1910), a volume which was not issued until after his death, contains not only his few hard and earthy verses, but also Synge's famous preface embodying his theory of poetry. The translations, which have been rendered in a highly intensified prose, are as racy as anything in his plays; his versions of Villon and Petrarch are remarkable for their adherence to the original though they radiate the adapter's own personality.

Synge died, just as his reputation had broken down borders, at a private hospital in Dublin, March 24, 1909.

## PRELUDE

Still south I went and west and south again,
Through Wicklow from the morning till the night,
And, far from cities and the sights of men,
Lived with the sunshine and the moon's delight.

I knew the stars, the flowers, and the birds,
The gray and wintry sides of many glens,
And did but half remember human words,
In converse with the mountains, moors and fens.

## BEG-INNISH

Bring Kateen-beug and Maurya Jude
To dance in Beg-Innish,[1]
And when the lads (they're in Dunquin)
Have sold their crabs and fish,
Wave fawny shawls and call them in,
And call the little girls who spin,
And seven weavers from Dunquin,
To dance in Beg-Innish.

I'll play you jigs, and Maurice Kean,
Where nets are laid to dry,
I've silken strings would draw a dance
From girls are lame or shy;
Four strings I've brought from Spain and France
To make your long men skip and prance,
Till stars look out to see the dance
Where nets are laid to dry.

We'll have no priest or peeler in
To dance in Beg-Innish;
But we'll have drink from M'riarty Jim
Rowed round while gannets fish,
A keg with porter to the brim,
That every lad may have his whim,
Till we up sails with M'riarty Jim
And sail from Beg-Innish.

## IN KERRY

We heard the thrushes by the shore and sea,
And saw the golden stars' nativity,
Then round we went the lane by Thomas Flynn,
Across the church where bones lie out and in;
And there I asked beneath a lonely cloud
Of strange delight, with one bird singing loud,
What change you'd wrought in graveyard, rock and sea,
To wake this new wild paradise for me. . . .
Yet knew no more than knew those merry sins
Had built this stack of thigh-bones, jaws and shins.

[1] The accent is on the last syllable.

## A QUESTION

I asked if I got sick and died, would you
With my black funeral go walking too,
If you'd stand close to hear them talk or pray
While I'm let down in that steep bank of clay.

And, No, you said, for if you saw a crew
Of living idiots pressing round that new
Oak coffin—they alive, I dead beneath
That board—you'd rave and rend them with your teeth.

## ON AN ISLAND

You've plucked a curlew, drawn a hen,
Washed the shirts of seven men,
You've stuffed my pillow, stretched the sheet,
And filled the pan to wash your feet,
You've cooped the pullets, wound the clock,
And rinsed the young men's drinking crock;
And now we'll dance to jigs and reels,
Nailed boots chasing girls' naked heels,
Until your father'll start to snore,
And Jude, now you're married, will stretch on the floor.

## DREAD

Beside a chapel I'd a room looked down,
Where all the women from the farms and town,
On Holy-days and Sundays used to pass
To marriages, and christenings, and to Mass.

Then I sat lonely watching score and score,
Till I turned jealous of the Lord next door. . . .
Now by this window, where there's none can see,
The Lord God's jealous of yourself and me.

## IN MAY

In a nook
That opened south,
You and I
Lay mouth to mouth.

A snowy gull
And sooty daw
Came and looked
With many a caw;

"Such," I said,
"Are I and you,
When you've kissed me
Black and blue!"

## A TRANSLATION FROM PETRARCH

(*He is Jealous of the Heavens and the Earth*)

What a grudge I am bearing the earth that has its arms about her, and is holding that face away from me, where I was finding peace from great sadness.

What a grudge I am bearing the Heavens that are after taking her, and shutting her in with greediness, the Heavens that do push their bolt against so many.

What a grudge I am bearing the blessed saints that have got her sweet company, that I am always seeking; and what a grudge I am bearing against Death, that is standing in her two eyes, and will not call me with a word.

## TO THE OAKS OF GLENCREE

My arms are round you, and I lean
Against you, while the lark
Sings over us, and golden lights and green
Shadows are on your bark.

There'll come a season when you'll stretch
Black boards to cover me;
Then in Mount Jerome I will lie, poor wretch,
With worms eternally.

Nora Hopper was born in Exeter, England, on January 2, 1871, and married W. H. Chesson, a well-known writer, in 1901. Although the Irish element in her work is acquired and incidental, there is a distinct if fitful race consciousness in *Ballads in Prose* (1894) and *Under Quickened Boughs* (1896). She died suddenly April 14, 1906.

## A CONNAUGHT LAMENT

I will arise and go hence to the west,
And dig me a grave where the hill-winds call;
But O were I dead, were I dust, the fall
Of my own love's footstep would break my rest!

My heart in my bosom is black as a sloe!
I heed not cuckoo, nor wren, nor swallow:
Like a flying leaf in the sky's blue hollow
The heart in my breast is, that beats so low.

Because of the words your lips have spoken,
(O dear black head that I must not follow)
My heart is a grave that is stripped and hollow,
As ice on the water my heart is broken.

O lips forgetful and kindness fickle,
The swallow goes south with you: I go west
Where fields are empty and scythes at rest.
I am the poppy and you the sickle;
My heart is broken within my breast.

## EVA GORE-BOOTH

Eva Gore-Booth, the second daughter of Sir Henry Gore-Booth and the sister of Countess Marcievicz, was born in Sligo, Ireland, in 1871. She first appeared in "Æ" 's anthology, *New Songs*, in which so many of the modern Irish poets first came forward.

Her initial volume, *Poems* (1898), showed practically no distinction—not even the customary "promise." But *The One and the Many* (1904), *The Sorrowful Princess* (1907) and the later *The Sword of Justice* (1918) reveal the gift of the Celtic singer who is half mystic, half minstrel. Primarily philosophic, her verse often turns to lyrics as insistent as the two examples here reprinted.

## THE WAVES OF BREFFNY

The grand road from the mountain goes shining to the sea,
And there is traffic on it and many a horse and cart
But the little roads of Cloonagh are dearer far to me
And the little roads of Cloonagh go rambling through my heart.

A great storm from the ocean goes shouting o'er the hill,
And there is glory in it; and terror on the wind:
But the haunted air of twilight is very strange and still,
And the little winds of twilight are dearer to my mind.

The great waves of the Atlantic sweep storming on their way,
Shining green and silver with the hidden herring shoal;
But the little waves of Breffny have drenched my heart in spray,
And the little waves of Breffny go stumbling through my soul.

## WALLS

Free to all souls the hidden beauty calls,
The sea thrift dwelling on her spray-swept height,
The lofty rose, the low-grown aconite,
The gliding river and the stream that brawls
Down the sharp cliffs with constant breaks and falls—
All these are equal in the equal light—
All waters mirror the one Infinite.

God made a garden; it was men built walls.
But the wide sea from men is wholly freed;
Freely the great waves rise and storm and break,
Nor softlier go for any landlord's need,
Where rhythmic tides flow for no miser's sake
And none hath profit of the brown sea-weed,
But all things give themselves, yet none may take.

Moira O'Neill, a writer who has shunned public scrutiny, is known chiefly by a remarkable little collection of only twenty-five lyrics, *Songs of the Glens of Antrim* (1900), simple tunes as unaffected as the peasants of whom she sings. A second volume, *More Songs of the Glens of Antrim*, was published in 1921. The best of her poetry is dramatic without being theatrical; melodious without falling into the tinkle of most "popular" sentimental verse.

### A BROKEN SONG

*"Where am I from?"* From the green hills of Erin.
*"Have I no song then?"* My songs are all sung.
*"What o' my love?"* 'Tis alone I am farin'.
Old grows my heart, an' my voice yet is young.

*"If she was tall?"* Like a king's own daughter.
*"If she was fair?"* Like a mornin' o' May.
When she'd come laughin' 'twas the running wather,
When she'd come blushin' 'twas the break o' day.

*"Where did she dwell?"* Where one'st I had my dwellin'.
*"Who loved her best?"* There's no one now will know.
*"Where is she gone?"* Och, why would I be tellin'!
Where she is gone there I can never go.

### BEAUTY'S A FLOWER

*Youth's for an hour,*
*Beauty's a flower,*
*But love is the jewel that wins the world.*

Youth's for an hour, an' the taste o' life is sweet,
Ailes was a girl that stepped on two bare feet;
In all my days I never seen the one as fair as she,
I'd have lost my life for Ailes, an' she never cared for me.

Beauty's a flower, an' the days o' life are long,
There's little knowin' who may live to sing another song;
For Ailes was the fairest, but another is my wife,
An' Mary—God be good to her!—is all I love in life.

*Youth's for an hour,*
*Beauty's a flower,*
*But love is the jewel that wins the world.*

### THE FAIRY LOUGH[1]

Loughareema! Loughareema
  Lies so high among the heather;
A little lough, a dark lough,
  The wather's black and deep.
Ould herons go a-fishin' there,
  An' seagulls all together
Float roun' the one green island
  On the fairy lough asleep.

Loughareema! Loughareema!
  When the sun goes down at seven,
When the hills are dark an' *airy*,
  'Tis a curlew whistles sweet!
Then somethin' rustles all the reeds
  That stand so thick and even;
A little wave runs up the shore
  An' fleet as if on feet.

Loughareema! Loughareema!
  Stars come out an' stars are hidin';
The wather whispers on the stones,
  The flittherin' moths are free.
One'st before the mornin' light
  The Horsemen will come ridin'
Roun' and roun' the fairy lough,
  An' no one there to see!

## RALPH HODGSON

Ralph Hodgson was born in Yorkshire, in 1872. Though he has been most reticent regarding the facts of his life, separating the poet from the casual man by the intimation that "the poet should live in his poetry," this much has been gathered: He lived for a while in America; he worked as a pressman in Fleet Street; he was a professional draughtsman, being employed on the pictorial staff of an evening paper; he edited *Fry's Magazine;* he has bred bull terriers and, as a leading authority, has judged them, bull-terriers and pugilism being his private enthusiasms. In 1924,

[1] Lough = Loch or Lake.

Hodgson accepted an invitation to visit Japan as lecturer in English literature at Sendai University, about two hundred miles from Tokio. In 1928 the invitation was renewed and again accepted.

Although Hodgson has earned a livelihood in many capacities, he has kept his writing severely apart, refusing to stain his pen with hack-work of any sort. He has given only his highest moments to his art, believing with Housman that lyric poetry—and Hodgson is one of the purest lyric poets of his age—is not a casual recreation. Writing little and publishing less, Hodgson was unknown until he was thirty-six, his first book, *The Last Blackbird and Other Lines*, appearing in 1907. In 1913, he went into partnership with Lovat Fraser and Holbrook Jackson, publishing broadsides and chapbooks; many of his most famous poems appearing in the exquisite booklets issued by their press, "The Sign of Flying Fame." *Eve, The Bull, The Song of Honor, The Mystery and Other Poems* (1913-1914) found a wide circle of delighted readers in this format. A collected edition (entitled simply *Poems*) was published in 1917.

Hodgson's verses, full of the love of all natural things, a love that goes out to

> "an idle rainbow
> No less than laboring-seas,"

were originally brought out in the much-sought yellow wrappers with Lovat Fraser's charming decorations. His collected *Poems* appeared in America in 1918, receiving instant recognition.

One of the most graceful of word-magicians, Ralph Hodgson will retain his freshness as long as there are lovers of fresh and timeless songs. It is difficult to think of any anthology of contemporary English poetry that could omit "Eve," "The Bull," "The Song of Honor," and that memorable snatch of music, "Time, You Old Gypsy Man." One succumbs to the charm of "Eve" at the first reading; for here is the oldest of all legends told with a surprising simplicity and still more surprising difference. This Eve is neither the conscious sinner nor the symbolic Mother of men; she is, in Hodgson's candid lines, any young English country girl—filling her basket, regarding the world and the serpent itself with a frank and childlike wonder.

An outstanding feature of Hodgson's work is his sympathy with animal life. This wide humanitarianism is implicit in poems like "The Bull," but it is explicit in his outrage against the slaughter of birds for fine feathers ("Stupidity Street") and the irony of "The Bells of Heaven."

Influences are far to seek in this work, although one scents rather than sees a trace of Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" in "Eve" and Christopher Smart's "Song to David" in "The Song of

Honor." While Hodgson's poetry remains in the tradition, making no pretense to singularity or even originality, it has, because of an inherent candor, the spontaneity of a new genre.

## REASON

Reason has moons, but moons not hers
Lie mirrored on her sea,
Confusing her astronomers,
But O! delighting me.

## EVE

Eve, with her basket, was
Deep in the bells and grass,
Wading in bells and grass
Up to her knees.
Picking a dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Down in the bells and grass
Under the trees.

Mute as a mouse in a
Corner the cobra lay,
Curled round a bough of the
Cinnamon tall. . . .
Now to get even and
Humble proud heaven and
Now was the moment or
Never at all.

"Eva!" Each syllable
Light as a flower fell,
"Eva!" he whispered the
Wondering maid,
Soft as a bubble sung
Out of a linnet's lung,
Soft and most silverly
"Eva!" he said.

Picture that orchard sprite;
Eve, with her body white,

Supple and smooth to her
Slim finger tips;
Wondering, listening,
Listening, wondering,
Eve with a berry
Half-way to her lips.

Oh, had our simple Eve
Seen through the make-believe!
Had she but known the
Pretender he was!
Out of the boughs he came,
Whispering still her name,
Tumbling in twenty rings
Into the grass.

Here was the strangest pair
In the world anywhere,
Eve in the bells and grass
Kneeling, and he
Telling his story low. . . .
Singing birds saw them go
Down the dark path to
The Blasphemous Tree.

Oh, what a clatter when
Titmouse and Jenny Wren
Saw him successful and
Taking his leave!
How the birds rated him,
How they all hated him!
How they all pitied
Poor motherless Eve!

Picture her crying
Outside in the lane,
Eve, with no dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Haunting the gate of the
Orchard in vain. . . .
Picture the lewd delight
Under the hill tonight—

"Eva!" the toast goes round,
"Eva!" again.

## TIME, YOU OLD GYPSY MAN

Time, you old gypsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

All things I'll give you
Will you be my guest,
Bells for your jennet
Of silver the best,
Goldsmiths shall beat you
A great golden ring,
Peacocks shall bow to you,
Little boys sing,
Oh, and sweet girls will
Festoon you with may.
Time, you old gypsy,
Why hasten away?

Last week in Babylon,
Last night in Rome,
Morning, and in the crush
Under Paul's dome;
Under Paul's dial
You tighten your rein—
Only a moment,
And off once again;
Off to some city
Now blind in the womb,
Off to another
Ere that's in the tomb.

Time, you old gypsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

## THE BIRDCATCHER[1]

When flighting time is on, I go
With clap-net and decoy,
A-fowling after goldfinches
And other birds of joy;

I lurk among the thickets of
The Heart where they are bred,
And catch the twittering beauties as
They fly into my Head.

## THE SONG OF HONOR

I climbed the hill as light fell short,
And rooks came home in scramble sort,
And filled the trees and flapped and fought
And sang themselves to sleep;
An owl from nowhere with no sound
Swung by and soon was nowhere found,
I heard him calling half-way round,
Holloing loud and deep;
A pair of stars, faint pins of light,
Then many a star, sailed into sight,
And all the stars, the flower of night,
Were round me at a leap;
To tell how still the valleys lay
I heard the watchdog miles away
And bells of distant sheep.
I heard no more of bird or bell,
The mastiff in a slumber fell,
I stared into the sky,
As wondering men have always done
Since beauty and the stars were one,
Though none so hard as I.

It seemed, so still the valleys were,
As if the whole world knelt at prayer,
Save me and me alone;
So pure and wide that silence was
I feared to bend a blade of grass,
And there I stood like stone.

[1] Compare the poem on the same theme on page 723.

There, sharp and sudden, there I heard—
*Ah! some wild lovesick singing bird*
*Woke singing in the trees?*
*The nightingale and babble-wren*
*Were in the English greenwood then,*
*And you heard one of these?*
The babble-wren and nightingale
Sang in the Abyssian vale
That season of the year!
Yet, true enough, I heard them plain,
I heard them both again, again,
As sharp and sweet and clear
As if the Abyssinian tree
Had thrust a bough across the sea,
Had thrust a bough across to me
With music for my ear!

I heard them both, and, oh! I heard
The song of every singing bird
That sings beneath the sky,
And with the song of lark and wren
The song of mountains, moths and men
And seas and rainbows vie!

I heard the universal choir,
The Sons of Light exalt their Sire
With universal song,
Earth's lowliest and loudest notes,
Her million times ten million throats
Exalt Him loud and long,
And lips and lungs and tongues of Grace
From every part and every place
Within the shining of His face,
The universal throng.

I heard the hymn of being sound
From every well of honor found
In human sense and soul:
The song of poets when they write
The testament of Beautysprite

Upon a flying scroll,
The song of painters when they take
A burning brush for Beauty's sake
And limn her features whole—

The song of men divinely wise
Who look and see in starry skies
Not stars so much as robins' eyes,
And when these pale away
Hear flocks of shiny pleiades
Among the plums and apple trees
Sing in the summer day—

The song of all both high and low
To some blest vision true,
The song of beggars when they throw
The crust of pity all men owe
To hungry sparrows in the snow,
Old beggars hungry too—
The song of kings of kingdoms when
They rise above their fortune men,
And crown themselves anew—

The song of courage, heart and will
And gladness in a fight,
Of men who face a hopeless hill
With sparkling and delight,
The bells and bells of song that ring
Round banners of a cause or king
From armies bleeding white—

The song of sailors every one
When monstrous tide and tempest run
At ships like bulls at red,
When stately ships are twirled and spun
Like whipping tops and help there's none
And mighty ships ten thousand ton
Go down like lumps of lead—

And song of fighters stern as they
At odds with fortune night and day,
Crammed up in cities grim and gray

As thick as bees in hives,
Hosannas of a lowly throng
Who sing unconscious of their song,
Whose lips are in their lives—

And song of some at holy war
With spells and ghouls more dread by far
Than deadly seas and cities are,
Or hordes of quarreling kings—
The song of fighters great and small
The song of petty fighters all
And high heroic things—

The song of lovers—who knows how
Twitched up from place and time
Upon a sigh, a blush, a vow,
A curve or hue of cheek or brow,
Borne up and off from here and now
Into the void sublime!

And crying loves and passions still
In every key from soft to shrill
And numbers never done,
Dog-loyalties to faith and friend,
And loves like Ruth's of old no end,
And intermissions none—

And burst on burst for beauty and
For numbers not behind,
From men whose love of motherland
Is like a dog's for one dear hand,
Sole, selfless, boundless, blind—
And song of some with hearts beside
For men and sorrows far and wide,
Who watch the world with pity and pride
And warm to all mankind—

And endless joyous music rise
From children at their play,
And endless soaring lullabies
From happy, happy mothers' eyes,
And answering crows and baby cries,

How many who shall say!
And many a song as wondrous well
With pangs and sweets intolerable
From lonely hearths too gray to tell,
God knows how utter gray!
And song from many a house of care
When pain has forced a footing there
And there's a Darkness on the stair
Will not be turned away—

And song—that song whose singers come
With old kind tales of pity from
The Great Compassion's lips,
That make the bells of Heaven to peal
Round pillows frosty with the feel
Of Death's cold finger tips—

The song of men all sorts and kinds,
As many tempers, moods and minds
As leaves are on a tree,
As many faiths and castes and creeds,
As many human bloods and breeds
As in the world may be;

The song of each and all who gaze
On Beauty in her naked blaze,
Or see her dimly in a haze,
Or get her light in fitful rays
And tiniest needles even,
The song of all not wholly dark,
Not wholly sunk in stupor stark
Too deep for groping Heaven—

And alleluias sweet and clear
And wild with beauty men mishear,
From choirs of song as near and dear
To Paradise as they,
The everlasting pipe and flute
Of wind and sea and bird and brute,
And lips deaf men imagine mute
In wood and stone and clay,

The music of a lion strong
That shakes a hill a whole night long,
A hill as loud as he,
The twitter of a mouse among
Melodious greenery,
The ruby and the night-owl's song,
The nightingale's—all three,
The song of life that wells and flows
From every leopard, lark and rose
And everything that gleams or goes
Lack-luster in the sea.

I heard it all, each, every note
Of every lung and tongue and throat,
Aye, every rhythm and rhyme
Of everything that lives and loves
And upward ever upward moves
From lowly to sublime!
Earth's multitudinous Sons of Light,
I heard them lift their lyric might
With each and every chanting sprite
That lit the sky that wondrous night
As far as eye could climb!

I heard it all, I heard the whole
Harmonious hymn of being roll
Up through the chapel of my soul
And at the altar die,
And in the awful quiet then
Myself I heard, Amen, Amen,
Amen I heard me cry!
I heard it all and then although
I caught my flying senses, oh,
A dizzy man was I!
I stood and stared; the sky was lit,
The sky was stars all over it,
I stood, I knew not why,
Without a wish, without a will,
I stood upon that silent hill
And stared into the sky until
My eyes were blind with stars and still
I stared into the sky.

## THE LATE, LAST ROOK

The old gilt vane and spire receive
The last beam eastward striking;
The first shy bat to peep at eve
Has found her to his liking.
The western heaven is dull and gray,
The last red glow has followed day.

The late, last rook is housed and will
With cronies lie till morrow;
If there's a rook loquacious still
In dream he hunts a furrow,
And flaps behind a specter team,
Or ghostly scarecrows walk his dream.

## THE BULL

See an old unhappy bull,
Sick in soul and body both,
Slouching in the undergrowth
Of the forest beautiful,
Banished from the herd he led,
Bulls and cows a thousand head.

Cranes and gaudy parrots go
Up and down the burning sky;
Tree-top cats purr drowsily
In the dim-day green below;
And troops of monkeys, nutting some,
All disputing, go and come;
And things abominable sit
Picking offal buck or swine,
On the mess and over it
Burnished flies and beetles shine,
And spiders big as bladders lie
Under hemlocks ten foot high;

And a dotted serpent curled
Round and round and round a tree,
Yellowing its greenery,
Keeps a watch on all the world,

All the world and this old bull
In the forest beautiful.

Bravely by his fall he came:
One he led, a bull of blood
Newly come to lustihood,
Fought and put his prince to shame,
Snuffed and pawed the prostrate head
Tameless even while it bled.

There they left him, every one,
Left him there without a lick,
Left him for the birds to pick,
Left him for the carrion,
Vilely from their bosom cast
Wisdom, worth and love at last.
When the lion left his lair
And roared his beauty through the hills,
And the vultures pecked their quills
And flew into the middle air,
Then this prince no more to reign
Came to life and lived again.
He snuffed the herd in far retreat,
He saw the blood upon the ground,
And snuffed the burning airs around
Still with beevish odors sweet,
While the blood ran down his head
And his mouth ran slaver red.
Pity him, this fallen chief,
All his splendor, all his strength
All his beauty's breadth and length
Dwindled down with shame and grief,
Half the bull he was before,
Bones and leather, nothing more.

See him standing dewlap-deep
In the rushes at the lake,
Surly, stupid, half asleep,
Waiting for his heart to break
And the birds to join the flies
Feasting at his bloodshot eyes,—

Standing with his head hung down
In a stupor, dreaming things:
Green savannas, jungles brown,
Battlefields and bellowings,
Bulls undone and lions dead
And vultures flapping overhead.
Dreaming things: of days he spent
With his mother gaunt and lean
In the valley warm and green,
Full of baby wonderment,
Blinking out of silly eyes
At a hundred mysteries;
Dreaming over once again
How he wandered with a throng
Of bulls and cows a thousand strong,
Wandered on from plain to plain,
Up the hill and down the dale,
Always at his mother's tail;
How he lagged behind the herd,
Lagged and tottered, weak of limb,
And she turned and ran to him
Blaring at the loathly bird
Stationed always in the skies,
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

Dreaming maybe of a day,
When her drained and drying paps
Turned him to the sweets and saps,
Richer fountains by the way,
And she left the bull she bore
And he looked to her no more;
And his little frame grew stout,
And his little legs grew strong,
And the way was not so long;
And his little horns came out,
And he played at butting trees
And bowlder-stones and tortoises,
Joined a game of knobby skulls
With the youngsters of his year,
All the other little bulls,
Learning both to bruise and bear,

Learning how to stand a shock
Like a little bull of rock.

Dreaming of a day less dim,
Dreaming of a time less far,
When the faint but certain star
Of destiny burned clear for him,
And a fierce and wild unrest
Broke the quiet of his breast,
And the gristles of his youth
Hardened in his comely pow,
And he came to fighting growth,
Beat his bull and won his cow,
And flew his tail and trampled off
Past the tallest, vain enough.
And curved about in splendor full
And curved again and snuffed the airs
As who should say, Come out who dares!
And all beheld a bull, a Bull,
And knew that here was surely one
That backed for no bull, fearing none.
And the leader of the herd
Looked and saw, and beat the ground,
And shook the forest with his sound,
Bellowed at the loathly bird
Stationed always in the skies,
Waiting for the flesh that dies.
Dreaming, this old bull forlorn,
Surely dreaming of the hour
When he came to sultan power,
And they owned him master-horn,
Chiefest bull of all among
Bulls and cows a thousand strong,
And in all the trampling herd
Not a bull that barred his way,
Not a cow that said him nay,
Not a bull or cow that erred
In the furnace of his look
Dared a second, worse rebuke;
Not in all the forest wide,

Jungle, thicket, pasture, fen,
Not another dared him then,
Dared him and again defied;
Not a sovereign buck or boar
Came a second time for more.
Not a serpent that survived
Once the terrors of his hoof,
Risked a second time reproof,
Came a second time and lived,
Not a serpent in its skin
Came again for discipline;

Not a leopard bright as flame,
Flashing fingerhooks of steel,
That a wooden tree might feel,
Met his fury once and came
For a second reprimand,
Not a leopard in the land,
Not a lion of them all,
Not a lion of the hills,
Hero of a thousand kills,
Dared a second fight and fall,
Dared that ram terrific twice,
Paid a second time the price. . . .

Pity him, this dupe of dream,
Leader of the herd again
Only in his daft old brain,
Once again the bull supreme
And bull enough to bear the part
Only in his tameless heart.

Pity him that he must wake.
Even now the swarm of flies
Blackening his bloodshot eyes
Bursts and blusters round the lake,
Scattered from the feast half-fed,
By great shadows overhead,

And the dreamer turns away
From his visionary herds
And his splendid yesterday,
Turns to meet the loathly birds

Flocking round him from the skies,
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

## THE BELLS OF HEAVEN

'Twould ring the bells of Heaven
The wildest peal for years,
If Parson lost his senses
And people came to theirs,
And he and they together
Knelt down with angry prayers
For tamed and shabby tigers
And dancing dogs and bears,
And wretched, blind pit ponies,
And little hunted hares.

## THE HAMMERS

Noise of hammers once I heard
Many hammers, busy hammers,
Beating, shaping night and day,
Shaping, beating dust and clay
To a palace; saw it reared;
Saw the hammers laid away.

And I listened, and I heard
Hammers beating, night and day,
In the palace newly reared,
Beating it to dust and clay:
Other hammers, muffled hammers,
Silent hammers of decay.

## STUPIDITY STREET

I saw with open eyes
Singing birds sweet
Sold in the shops
For the people to eat,
Sold in the shops of
Stupidity Street.

I saw in a vision
The worm in the wheat,
And in the shops nothing
For people to eat:
Nothing for sale in
Stupidity Street.

### THE MYSTERY

He came and took me by the hand
  Up to a red rose tree,
He kept His meaning to Himself
  But gave a rose to me.

I did not pray Him to lay bare
  The mystery to me,
Enough the rose was Heaven to smell,
  And His own face to see.

## CHARLES DALMON

Charles Dalmon was born at Old Shoreham, Sussex, in 1872. He was supposed to be educated at a small country school, but most of his education, he says, came from his mother and from the shepherds and farm-laborers around him in his boyhood. Although not typical of the period, his early contributions appeared in *The Yellow Book*, since which time he has appeared in liberal as well as conservative periodicals.

Dalmon's poetry is neither large in theme nor in gesture. Grace is its chief characteristic, typified by the very titles of his books: *Minutiae* (1892), *Song Favors* (1895), *A Poor Man's Riches* (1922), *Singing as I Go* (1927). But Dalmon's verse is saved from slightness or insipidity by the neatness of its execution and a half-submerged wit.

### THE OLD IRISH YARD-MAN

The number of his years no creature knows:
  They must have had the fortune to begin
  Before the doctrine of original sin,
For even when he takes a stick and throws
To stop a noisy conference of crows,
  The eyes of him, deep-set in wrinkled skin,
  Are lighted from such innocence within,
That all the pureness of his nature shows.

And when, at feeding time, the yard-fowls chase
Each other in a wild and reckless race
To where he stands and calls, and ducks and geese
And hens and cockerels are told to cease
Their greedy clatter, in his Gaelic words
I hear St. Francis preaching to the birds.

## FOUR QUATRAINS

### MUCH IN LITTLE

The mighty oak tree from an acorn towers;
A tiny seed can fill a field with flowers;
One bell alone tolls out the death of kings;
In every Sussex skylark Shelley sings.

### IN THE BEGINNING

Did one adventure bring to pass
The finished first green blade of grass;
Or those blue jewels that inlay
The pinions of the noisy jay?

### TO THE GHOST OF HAMLET'S FATHER

No ghost should be allowed to walk
And make such havoc with its talk:
When folks are dead, they should retire—
I have no patience with you, sire!

### DOCUMENTS

What man has written man may read;
But God fills every root and seed
With cryptic words, too strangely set
For mortals to decipher yet.

## JOHN McCRAE

John McCrae was born in Guelph, Ontario, Canada, in 1872. He was graduated in arts in 1894 and in medicine in 1898, finished his studies at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, and returned to Canada, joining the staff of the Medical School of McGill Uni-

versity. He was a lieutenant of artillery in South Africa (1899-1900) and was in charge of the Medical Division of the McGill Canadian General Hospital during the World War. After serving two years, he died of pneumonia, January, 1918, his volume, *In Flanders Fields* (1919), appearing posthumously.

Few who read the title poem of his book, possibly the most widely read poem produced by the war, realize that it is a perfect rondeau, one of the strictest of the French forms.

### IN FLANDERS FIELDS

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
  That mark our place; and in the sky
  The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
  Loved and were loved, and now we lie
    In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
  The torch; be yours to hold it high.
  If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
    In Flanders fields.

## FORD MADOX (HUEFFER) FORD

Ford Madox Hueffer (who, later in life, became Ford Madox Ford) was born in 1873, the grandson of Ford Madox Brown, a cousin of the Rossettis. He was educated at University College, London, and abroad, returning to edit *The English Review*. During his editorship he discovered many unknown writers who have since made reputations.

As an author, Ford first came into prominence as an associate of Joseph Conrad, collaborating with the latter on *The Inheritors* (1901) and *Romance* (1901). As a novelist in his own right, his fame rests on the Tietjens series: *Some Do Not* (1924), *No More Parades* (1925), *A Man Could Stand Up* (1926) and *Last Post* (1928). Although utterly different from Galsworthy's cycle, the

Tietjens novels prompt inevitable comparison with *The Forsyte Saga.* Ford's protagonist is a single man, not a family, and he deals with the impact of events in rapid succession on an individual, instead of social forces reacting through a period on a group. With the War as a living backdrop and in a style utterly his own, Ford has projected a figure, nervously intense, dully heroic and wholly characteristic of his times.

Although known primarily as a novelist, Ford has been a poet at intervals most of his life. *Collected Poems* (1913), *On Heaven and Poems Written on Active Service* (1918) and *New Poems* (1927) show a style that never strives to be "poetic" and is as personal as Ford's prose. Allied to no "school" Ford displays, in such poems as "Gray Matter" and "A House," an essential but unspectacular modernity.

## GRAY MATTER

*She.* They leave us nothing.
*He.* Still, a little's left.
*She.* A crabbed, ancient, dried biologist,
Somewhere very far from the sea, closed up from the sky,
Shut in from the leaves, destroys our hopes and us.
*He.* Why no, our hopes and . . .
*She.* In his "Erster Heft"
Page something, I forget the line, he says
That, hidden as deep in the brain as he himself from hope,
There's this gray matter.
*He.* Why, 'tis there, dear heart.
*She.* That, if that hidden matter cools, decays,
Dies—what you will—our souls die out as well;
Since, hidden in the millionth of a cell,
Is all we have to give us consciousness.
*He.* Suppose it true.
*She.* Ah, never; better die,
Better have never lived than face this mist,
Better have never toiled to such distress.
*He.* It matters little.
*She.* Little!—Where shall I,
The woman, where shall you take part,
My poet? Where has either of us scope
In all this dead-dawning century that lacks all faith,
All hope, all aim, and all the mystery

That comforteth. Since he victorious
With his cold vapors chill out you and me,
The woman and the poet?
*He.* Never, dear.
For you and I remain,
The woman and the poet. And soft rain
Still falls and still the crocus flames,
The blackbird calls.
*She.* But half the sweet is gone.
The voices of our children at their games
Lack half their ring.
*He.* Why, never, dear. Out there
The sea's a cord of silver, still to south
Beyond the marsh.
*She.* Aye, but beyond it all,
And all beneath and all above, half of the glory's done.
And I and you . . .
*He.* Why, no. The ancient sun
Shines as it ever shone, and still your mouth
Is sweet as of old it was.
*She.* But what remains?
*He.* All the old pains,
And all the old sweet pleasures and the mystery
Of time, slow travel and unfathomed deep.
*She.* And then this cold extinction? . . .
*He.* Dreamless sleep.
*She.* And nothing matters?
*He.* All the old, old things.
Whether to Church or College rings
The clamorous bell of creeds,
We, in the lush, far meads,
Poet and woman, past the city walls,
Hear turn by turn the burden of their calls,
Believe what we believe, feel what we feel,
Like what we list of what they cry within
Cathedral or laborat'ry,
Since by the revolution of the wheel,
The one swings under, let us wait content.
*She.* Yet it is hard.
*He.* Ah, no. A sure intent,
For me and you.

The right, true, joyful word, the sweet, true phrase,
The calling of our children from the woods these garden days
Remain.—These drops of rain have laid the dust
And in our soft brown seed-beds formed the crust
We needed for our sowings. Bring your seed,
And you shall prick it in, I close the row.
Be sure the little grains your hands have pressed
Tenderly, lovingly, home, shall flourish best.
*She.* Aye, you are still my poet.
*He.* Even so
Betwixt the rain and shine. Half true's still true
More truly than the thing that's proved and dead.
The sun lends flame to every crocus head
Once more, and we once more must sow and weed
Since in the earth the newly stirring seed
Begins the ancient mystery anew.

## "THERE SHALL BE MORE JOY . . ."

The little angels of Heaven
Each wear a long white dress,
And in the tall arcadings
Play ball and play at chess;

With never a soil on their garments,
Not a sigh the whole day long,
Not a bitter note in their pleasure,
Not a bitter note in their song.

But they shall know keener pleasure,
And they shall know joy more rare—
Keener, keener pleasure
When you, my dear, come there.

. . . . .

The little angels of Heaven
Each wear a long white gown,
And they lean over the ramparts
Waiting and looking down.

## A HOUSE

(*First Part*)

*The House.* I am the House!
I resemble
The drawing of a child
That draws "just a house." Two windows and two doors,
Two chimney pots;
Only two floors.
Three windows on the upper one; a fourth
Looks towards the north.
I am very simple and mild;
I am very gentle and sad and old.
I have stood too long.

*The Tree.* I am the great Tree over above this House.
I resemble
The drawing of a child. Drawing "just a tree"
The child draws Me!
Heavy leaves, old branches, old knots:
I am more old than the house is old.
I have known nights so cold
I used to tremble;
For the sap was frozen in my branches,
And the mouse,
That stored her nuts in my knot-holes, died. I am strong
Now . . . Let a storm come wild
Over the Sussex Wold,
I no longer fear it.
I have stood too long!

*The Nightingale.* I am the Nightingale. The summer through
I sit
In the great tree, watching the house, and throw jewels
over it!
There is no one watching but I; no other soul to waken
Echoes in this valley night.

*The Unborn Son of the House.* You are mistaken!
I am the Son of the House!—
That shall have silver limbs, and clean straight haunches,
Lean hips, clean lips and a tongue of gold;
That shall inherit

A golden voice, and waken
A whole world's wonder!
*The Nightingale.* Young blood! You are right,
So you and I only
Listen and watch and waken
Under
The stars of the night.
*The Dog of the House.* You are mistaken!
This house stands lonely.
Let but a sound sound in the seven acres that surround
Their sleeping house,
And I, seeming to sleep, shall awaken.
Let but a mouse
Creep in the bracken,
I seeming to drowse, I shall hearken.
Let but a shadow darken
Their threshold; let but a finger
Lie long or linger,
Holding their latch:
I am their Dog. And I watch.
I am just Dog. And being His hound
I lie
All night with my head on my paws,
Watchful and whist!
*The Nightingale.* So you and I and their Son and I
Watch alone under the stars of the sky.
*The Cat of the House.* I am the Cat. And you lie!
I am the Atheist!
All laws
I coldly despise.
I have yellow eyes;
I am the Cat on the Mat the child draws
When it first has a pencil to use.
*The Milch-goat.* I am the Goat. I give milk!
*The Cat of the House.* I muse
Over the hearth with my 'minishing eyes
Until after
The last coal dies.
Every tunnel of the mouse,
Every channel of the cricket,

I have smelt.
I have felt
The secret shifting of the moldered rafter,
And heard
Every bird in the thicket.
I see
You,
Nightingale up in your tree!

*The Nightingale.* The night takes a turn towards coldness; the stars
Waver and shake.
Truly more wake,
More thoughts are afloat;
More folk are afoot than I knew!

*The Milch-goat.* I, even I, am the Goat!

*Cat of the House.* Enough of your stuff of dust and of mud!
I, born of a race of strange things,
Of deserts, great temples, great kings,
In the hot sand where the nightingale never sings!
Old he-gods of ingle and hearth,
Young she-gods of fur and of silk—
Not the mud of the earth—
Are the things that I dream of!

*The Milch-goat.* Tibby-Tab, more than you deem of
I dream of when chewing the cud
For my milk:
Who was born
Of a Nan with one horn and a liking for gin
In the backyard of an inn.
A child of Original Sin,
With a fleece of spun-silk
And two horns in the bud—
I, made in the image of Pan,
With my corrugate, vicious-cocked horn,
Now make milk for a child yet unborn.
That's a come-down!
And you with your mouse-colored ruff,
Discoursing your stuff-of-a-dream,
Sell your birthright for cream,
And bolt from a cuff or a frown.
That's a come-down!

So let it be! That's enough.
*The House.* The top star of the Plow now mounts
Up to his highest place
The dace
Hang silent in the pool.
The night is cool
Before the dawn. Behind the blind
Dies down the one thin candle.
Our harried man,
My lease-of-a-life-long Master,
Studies against disaster;
Gropes for some handle
Against too heavy Fate; pores over his accounts,
Studying into the morn
For the sake of his child unborn.
*The Unborn Son of the House.* The vibrant notes of the spheres,
Thin, sifting sounds of the dew,
I hear. The mist on the meres
Rising I hear . . . So here's
To a lad shall be lusty and bold,
With a voice and a heart ringing true!
To a house of a livelier hue!
*The House.* That is true!
I have stood here too long and grown old.
*Himself.* What is the matter with the wicks?
What on earth's the matter with the wax?
The candle wastes in the draught;
The blind's worn thin!
. . . Thirty-four and four, ten . . .
And ten . . . are forty-nine!
And twenty pun' twelve and six was all
I made by the clover.
It's a month since I laughed:
I have given up wine.
And then . . .
The Income Tax!
*The Dog of the House.* The mare's got out of the stable!
*The Cat of the House.* She's able, over and over,
To push up the stable latch . . .
Over and over again. You would say she's a witch,

With a spite on our Man!
*The Milch-goat.* Heu! Did you see how she ran!
She's after the clover; she's over the ditch,
Doing more harm than a dozen of goats
When there's no one to watch.
Yet she is the sober old mare with her skin full of oats,
Whereas we get dry bracken and heather;
Snatching now and then a scrap of old leather,
Or half an old tin,
As the price of original sin!
*Himself.* I shall live to sell
The clock from the hall;
I shall have to pawn my old Dad's watch,
Or fell
The last old oak; or sell half the stock . . .
Or all!
Or the oak chest out of the hall.
One or the other—or all.
God, it is hell to be poor
For ever and ever, keeping the Wolf from the door!
*The Cat of the House.* Wouldn't you say
That Something, heavy and furry and gray,
Was sniffing round the door?
Wouldn't you say
Skinny fingers, stretching from the thicket,
Felt for the latch of the wicket?
*Himself.* You would almost say
These blows were repercussions
Of an avenging Fate!
But how have we earned them . . .
The sparks that fell on the cornricks and burned them
Still in the ear;
And all the set-backs of the year—
Frost, drought and demurrage,
The tiles blown half off the roof?
What is it, what is it all for?
Chastisement of pride? I swear we have no pride!
We ride
Behind an old mare with a flea-bitten hide!
Or over-much love for a year-old bride?
But it's your duty to love your bride! . . . But still,

All the sows that died,
And the cows all going off milk;
The cream coming out under proof;
The hens giving over laying;
The bullocks straying,
Getting pounded over the hill!
It used to be something—cold feet going over
The front of a trench after Stand-to at four!
But these other things—God, how they make you blench!
Aye, these are the pip-squeaks that call for
Four-in-the-morning courage . . .
May you never know, my wench,
That's asleep up the stair!

*Herself* (*In her sleep*). I'll have a kitchen all white tiles;
And a dairy, all marble the shelves and the floor;
And a larder, cream-white and full of air.
I'll have whitewood kegs for the flour,
And blackwood kegs for the rice and barley,
And silvery jugs for the milk and cream . . .
O glorious Me!
And hour by hour by hour by hour,
On piles of cushions from hearth to door,
I'll sit sewing my silken seams,
I'll sit just dreaming my silver dreams;
With a little, mettlesome, brown-legged Charley,
To leave his ploys [1] and come to my knee,
And question how God can be Three-in-One
And One-in-Three.
And all the day and all the day
Nothing but hoys [2] for my dearest one;
And no care at all but to kiss and twine;
And nought to contrive for but ploys and play
For my son, my son, my son, my son!
Only at nine,
With the dinner finished, the men at their wine;
And the girls in the parlor at forfeits for toffee,
I'll make such after-dinner coffee . . .
But it's all like a dream!

*Himself.* If Dixon could pay! . . . But he never will.

[1] Ploys = games, sports.
[2] Hoys = enticements.

He promised to do it yesterday . . . But poor old Dicky's
been through the mill.
And it's late—it's too late to sit railing at Fate!
He'd pay if he could: but he's got *his* fix on . . .
Yet . . . If he *could* pay—
God!—It would carry us over the day
Of Herself!
*The Clock in the Room.* I am the Clock on the Shelf!
Is . . . Was . . . Is . . . Was!
Too late . . . Because . . . Too late . . . Because . . .
One! . . . Two! . . . Three! . . . Four!
*Himself.* Just over The Day and a week or two more!
And we'd maybe get through.
Not with a hell of a lot
Of margin to spare . . . But just through!
*The Clock in the Hall.* One! . . . Two! . . . One! . . . Two!
As . . . your . . . hours . . . pass
I re . . . cord them
Though you . . . waste them
Or have . . . stored them
ALL . . .
One!
Two!
Three!
Four!
Begun!
Half through!
Let be!
No more at all!
I am the Great Clock in the Hall!

## WALTER DE LA MARE

Walter (John) De la Mare was born at Charlton, in Kent, in 1873. He was educated at St. Paul's school in London and was employed for eighteen years in the English branch of The Standard Oil Company of America.

His first volume, *Songs of Childhood* (1902), was published under the pseudonym of "Walter Ramal," an anagram of part of his name. The first volume published under his own name was the novel *Henry Brocken* (1904), a form to which he returned with

phenomenal success in *Memoirs of a Midget* (1921), a permanent edition to the world's small stock of philosophic fiction.

By 1929 De la Mare was the author of some twenty-three volumes which seem to fall into four categories: (1) The poetry of metaphysical phantasy. (2) The poems to and of children. (3) The mixture of prose and verse achieved in *Ding Dong Bell* (1924). (4) The introspective prose.

Although not the most important, his most popular verse is that which is centered in the child's sphere. As Harold Williams has written, "De la Mare is the singer of a young and romantic world, understanding and perceiving as a child." This poet paints simple scenes of miniature loveliness; he uses fragments of fairy-like delicacy and, with the least consequential matter, achieves a grace remarkable in its appeal. "In a few words, seemingly artless and unsought" (to quote Williams again), "he can express a pathos or a hope as wide as man's life."

De la Mare is an astonishing joiner of words; in *Peacock Pie* (1913) and *Down-a-Down Derry* (1922) he surprises us again and again by transforming what began as a child's nonsense-rhyme into a thrilling snatch of music. A score of times he takes events as casual as the feeding of chickens or the swallowing of physic, berry-picking, eating, hair-cutting—and turns them into magic. These poems read like lyrics of William Shakespeare rendered by Mother Goose. The trick of revealing the ordinary in whimsical colors, of catching the commonplace off its guard, is the first of De la Mare's two chief gifts.

This poet's second gift is his sense of the supernatural, of the fantastic other-world that lies on the edges of our consciousness. Sometimes, as in "At the Keyhole" and "The Mocking Fairy," the sinister turns into the lightly *macabre;* often the unbelievable, as in "Sam" and "Berries," is more homely-natural than the real. *The Listeners* (1912) is a book that, like all the best of De la Mare, is full of half-heard whispers. Moonlight and mystery seem soaked in the lines, and a cool wind from Nowhere blows over them. That most suggestive of modern verses, "The Listeners," and the brief music of "An Epitaph" are two examples among many. In the first of these poems there is an uncanny splendor. What we have here is the effect, the thrill, the overtones, of a ghost story rather than the narrative itself—the less than half-told adventure of some new Childe Roland heroically challenging a heedless universe. Never have silence and black night been reproduced more creepily, nor has the symbolism of man's courage facing the cryptic riddle of life been more memorably expressed.

De la Mare's chief distinction, however, lies not so much in what he says as in how he says it; he can even take outworn words like

"thridding," "athwart," "amaranthine" and make them live again in a poetry that is of no time and of all time. He writes, it has been said, as much for antiquity as for posterity; he is a poet who is distinctively in the world and yet not wholly of it.

*Motley and Other Poems* (1918) was followed by *Collected Poems, 1901-1918,* published in 1920, and *The Veil and Other Poems* (1921). *Come Hither* (1923), a collection apparently designed for children, is actually for mature minds. In all of these—even in the anthology—De la Mare betrays a speculation which is kin to a preoccupation: the paradox of mortality and immortality. Henry Newbolt, in *New Paths on Helicon,* recognizes this pervading quality, but prefers to call it "an inveterate habit of questioning. . . . Even the descriptions in which he excels are of the nature of a search: he attempts, like the Pre-Raphaelite painters, to pierce by intensity of vision through to the reality behind the visible word."

Technically, De la Mare's poetry is most interesting for the manner in which he achieves a new music merely by extending the line of an old one. His extra syllables, turns and grace-notes give novelty to themes and measures in themselves traditional. His idiom, while not spectacular, is as singular and unmistakable as a finger-print. His form, like that of every true poet, does not rise from cultivated ingenuity nor conscious difference, but is inherent in the *Mensch an sich,* being a reflection of his individuality.

## THE LISTENERS

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveler,
  Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
  Of the forest's ferny floor.
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
  Above the Traveler's head:
And he smote upon the door again a second time;
  "Is there anybody there?" he said.
But no one descended to the Traveler;
  No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his gray eyes,
  Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
  That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
  To that voice from the world of men:

Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair
That goes down to the empty hall,
Hearkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveler's call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
'Neath the starred and leafy sky;
For he suddenly smote on the door, even
Louder, and lifted his head:—
"Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
From the one man left awake:
Aye, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

## AN EPITAPH

Here lies a most beautiful lady,
Light of step and heart was she;
I think she was the most beautiful lady
That ever was in the West Country.

But beauty vanishes; beauty passes;
However rare—rare it be;
And when I crumble, who will remember
This lady of the West Country?

## THE TRUANTS

Ere my heart beats too coldly and faintly
To remember sad things, yet be gay,
I would sing a brief song of the world's little children
Magic hath stolen away.

The primroses scattered by April,
  The stars of the wide Milky Way,
Cannot outnumber the hosts of the children
  Magic hath stolen away.

The buttercup green of the meadows,
  The snow of the blossoming may,
Lovelier are not than the legions of children
  Magic hath stolen away.

The waves tossing surf in the moonbeam,
  The albatross lone on the spray,
Alone know the tears wept in vain for the children
  Magic hath stolen away.

In vain: for at hush of the evening,
  When the stars twinkle into the gray,
Seems to echo the far-away calling of children
  Magic hath stolen away.

## OLD SUSAN

When Susan's work was done, she'd sit
With one fat guttering candle lit,
And window opened wide to win
The sweet night air to enter in;
There, with a thumb to keep her place
She'd read, with stern and wrinkled face.
Her mild eyes gliding very slow
Across the letters to and fro,
While wagged the guttering candle flame
In the wind that through the window came.
And sometimes in the silence she
Would mumble a sentence audibly,
Or shake her head as if to say,
"You silly souls, to act this way!"
And never a sound from night I'd hear,
Unless some far-off cock crowed clear;
Or her old shuffling thumb should turn
Another page; and rapt and stern,

Through her great glasses bent on me,
She'd glance into reality;
And shake her round old silvery head,
With—"You!—I thought you was in bed!"—
Only to tilt her book again,
And rooted in Romance remain.

## THE OLD MEN

Old and alone sit we,
Caged, riddle-rid men;
Lost to earth's "Listen!" and "See!"
Thought's "Wherefore?" and "When?"
Only far memories stray
Of a past once lovely, but now
Wasted and faded away,
Like green leaves from the bough.
Vast broods the silence of night;
And the ruinous moon
Lifts on our faces her light,
Whence all dreaming is gone.
We speak not; trembles each head;
In their sockets our eyes are still;
Desire as cold as the dead,
Without wonder or will.
And one, with a lanthorn, draws near,
At clash with the moon in our eyes:
"Where art thou?" he asks: "I am here!"
One by one we arise.
And none lifts a hand to withhold
A friend from the touch of that foe:
Heart cries unto heart, "Thou art old!"
Yet reluctant we go.

## SOME ONE

Some one came knocking
At my wee, small door;
Some one came knocking,
I'm sure—sure—sure;

I listened, I opened,
I looked to left and right,
But nought there was a-stirring
In the still dark night;
Only the busy beetle
Tap-tapping in the wall,
Only from the forest
The screech-owl's call,
Only the cricket whistling
While the dewdrops fall,
So I know not who came knocking,
At all, at all, at all.

## AT THE KEYHOLE

"Grill me some bones," said the Cobbler,
"Some bones, my pretty Sue;
I'm tired of my lonesome with heels and soles,
Springsides and uppers too;
A mouse in the wainscot is nibbling;
A wind in the keyhole drones;
And a sheet webbed over my candle, Susie,
Grill me some bones!"

"Grill me some bones," said the Cobbler,
"I sat at my tic-tac-to;
And a footstep came to my door and stopped,
And a hand groped to and fro;
And I peered up over my boot and last;
And my feet went cold as stones:—
I saw an eye at the keyhole, Susie!—
Grill me some bones!"

## THE MOCKING FAIRY

"Won't you look out of your window, Mrs. Gill?"
Quoth the Fairy, nidding, nodding in the garden;
"*Can't* you look out of your window, Mrs. Gill?"
Quoth the Fairy, laughing softly in the garden;
But the air was still, the cherry boughs were still,

And the ivy-tod[1] 'neath the empty sill,
And never from her window looked out Mrs. Gill
On the Fairy shrilly mocking in the garden.

"What have they done with you, you poor Mrs. Gill?"
Quoth the Fairy brightly glancing in the garden;
"Where have they hidden you, you poor old Mrs. Gill?"
Quoth the Fairy dancing lightly in the garden;
But night's faint veil now wrapped the hill,
Stark 'neath the stars stood the dead-still Mill,
And out of her cold cottage never answered Mrs. Gill
The Fairy mimbling mambling in the garden.

## SAM

When Sam goes back in memory,
It is to where the sea
Breaks on the shingle, emerald-green,
In white foam, endlessly;
He says—with small brown eye on mine—
"I used to keep awake,
And lean from my window in the moon,
Watching those billows break.
And half a million tiny hands,
And eyes, like sparks of frost,
Would dance and come tumbling into the moon,
On every breaker tossed.
And all across from star to star,
I've seen the watery sea,
With not a single ship in sight,
Just ocean there, and me;
And heard my father snore. And once,
As sure as I'm alive,
Out of those wallowing, moon-flecked waves
I saw a mermaid dive;
Head and shoulders above the wave,
Plain as I now see you,
Combing her hair, now back, now front,
Her two eyes peeping through;
Calling me, 'Sam!'—quietlike—'Sam!' . . .

[1] Tod = dense foliage.

But me . . . I never went,
Making believe I kind of thought
'Twas some one else she meant . . .
Wonderful lovely there she sat,
Singing the night away,
All in the solitudinous sea
Of that there lonely bay.
P'raps," and he'd smooth his hairless mouth,
"P'raps, if 'twere now, my son,
P'raps, if I heard a voice say, 'Sam!'
Morning would find me gone."

## BERRIES

There was an old woman
Went blackberry picking
Along the hedges
From Weep to Wicking.
Half a pottle—
No more she had got,
When out steps a Fairy
From her green grot;
And says, "Well, Jill,
Would 'ee pick 'ee mo?"
And Jill, she curtseys,
And looks just so.
"Be off," says the Fairy,
"As quick as you can,
Over the meadows
To the little green lane,
That dips to the hayfields
Of Farmer Grimes:
I've berried those hedges
A score of times;
Bushel on bushel
I'll promise 'ee, Jill,
This side of supper
If 'ee pick with a will."
She glints very bright,
And speaks her fair;
Then lo, and behold!
She had faded in air.

Be sure Old Goodie
  She trots betimes
Over the meadows
  To Farmer Grimes.
And never was queen
  With jewelry rich
As those same hedges
  From twig to ditch;
Like Dutchmen's coffers,
  Fruit, thorn, and flower—
They shone like William
  And Mary's Bower.
And be sure Old Goodie
  Went back to Weep,
So tired with her basket
  She scarce could creep.

When she comes in the dusk
  To her cottage door,
There's Towser wagging
  As never before,
To see his Missus
  So glad to be
Come from her fruit-picking
  Back to he.
As soon as next morning
  Dawn was gray,
The pot on the hob
  Was simmering away;
And all in a stew
  And a hugger-mugger
Towser and Jill
  A-boiling of sugar,
And the dark clear fruit
  That from Faërie came
For syrup and jelly
  And blackberry jam.

Twelve jolly gallipots
  Jill put by;
And one little teeny one,
  One inch high;

And that she's hidden
A good thumb deep,
Half way over
From Wicking to Weep.

## ALL BUT BLIND

All but blind
In his chambered hole
Gropes for worms
The four-clawed Mole.

All but blind
In the evening sky,
The hooded Bat
Twirls softly by.

All but blind
In the burning day
The Barn-Owl blunders
On her way.

And blind as are
These three to me,
So, blind to Some-one
I must be.

## SUMMER EVENING

The sandy cat by the Farmer's chair
Mews at his knee for dainty fare;
Old Rover in his moss-greened house
Mumbles a bone, and barks at a mouse.
In the dewy fields the cattle lie
Chewing the cud 'neath a fading sky.
Dobbin at manger pulls his hay:
Gone is another summer's day.

## THERE BLOOMS NO BUD IN MAY

There blooms no bud in May
Can for its white compare
With snow at break of day,
On fields forlorn and bare.

For shadow it hath rose,
Azure, and amethyst;
And every air that blows
Dies out in beauteous mist.

It hangs the frozen bough
With flowers on which the night
Wheeling her darkness through
Scatters a starry light.

Fearful of its pale glare
In flocks the starlings rise;
Slide through the frosty air,
And perch with plaintive cries.

Only the inky rook,
Hunched cold in ruffled wings,
Its snowy nest forsook,
Caws of unnumbered Springs.

## THE SCARECROW

All winter through I bow my head
  Beneath the driving rain;
The North wind powders me with snow
  And blows me black again;
At midnight 'neath a maze of stars
  I flame with glittering rime,
And stand, above the stubble, stiff
  As mail at morning-prime.
But when that child, called Spring, and all
  His host of children, come,
Scattering their buds and dew upon
  These acres of my home,
Some rapture in my rags awakes;
  I lift void eyes and scan
The skies for crows, those ravening foes
  Of my strange master, Man.
I watch him striding lank behind
  His clashing team, and know
Soon will the wheat swish body high
  Where once lay sterile snow;

Soon shall I gaze across a sea
  Of sun-begotten grain,
Which my unflinching watch hath sealed
  For harvest once again.

## THE GHOST

"Who knocks?" "I, who was beautiful,
Beyond all dreams to restore,
I, from the roots of the dark thorn am hither,
And knock on the door."

"Who speaks?" "I—once was my speech
Sweet as the bird's on the air.
When echo lurks by the waters to heed;
'Tis I speak thee fair."

"Dark is the hour!" "Aye, and cold."
"Lone is my house." "Ah, but mine?"
"Sight, touch, lips, eyes yearned in vain."
"Long dead these to thine. . . ."

Silence. Still faint on the porch
Brake the flames of the stars.
In gloom groped a hope-wearied hand
Over keys, bolts, and bars.

Dews were still betwixt us twain;
Stars a trembling beauty shed;
Yet—not a whisper comes again
Of the words he said.

## SILVER

Slowly, silently, now the moon
Walks the night in her silver shoon;
This way, and that, she peers, and sees
Silver fruit upon silver trees;
One by one the casements catch
Her beams beneath the silvery thatch;
Couched in his kennel, like a log,
With paws of silver sleeps the dog;

From their shadowy cote the white breasts peep
Of doves in a silver-feathered sleep;
A harvest mouse goes scampering by,
With silver claws and a silver eye;
And moveless fish in the water gleam,
By silver reeds in a silver stream.

### NOD

Softly along the road of evening,
In a twilight dim with rose,
Wrinkled with age, and drenched with dew
Old Nod, the shepherd, goes.

His drowsy flock streams on before him,
Their fleeces charged with gold,
To where the sun's last beam leans low
On Nod the shepherd's fold.

The hedge is quick and green with briar,
From their sand the conies creep;
And all the birds that fly in heaven
Flock singing home to sleep.

His lambs outnumber a noon's roses,
Yet, when night's shadows fall,
His blind old sheep-dog, Slumber-soon,
Misses not one of all.

His are the quiet steeps of dreamland,
The waters of no-more-pain;
His ram's bell rings 'neath an arch of stars,
"Rest, rest, and rest again."

## G. K. CHESTERTON

That brilliant journalist, novelist, essayist, publicist and lyricist, Gilbert Keith Chesterton, was born at Campden Hill, Kensington, in 1874, and began his literary life by reviewing books on art for various magazines. He is best known as a writer of paradoxical essays on anything and everything, such as *Tremendous Trifles*

(1909), *Varied Types* (1905), and *All Things Considered* (1910). But he is also a stimulating critic; a keen appraiser, as shown in his volume *Heretics* (1905), his analytical studies of Robert Browning, Charles Dickens, and George Bernard Shaw; a writer of strange and grotesque romances like *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* (1906), *The Man Who Was Thursday* (1908), which Chesterton himself has sub-titled "A Nightmare," and that mad extravaganza with songs for a sublimated comic-opera, *The Flying Inn* (1914). This being insufficient to exhaust his creative energy, he is also the author of several books of fantastic short stories, ranging from the whimsical narratives in *The Club of Queer Trades* (1905) to that amazing sequence begun with *The Innocence of Father Brown* (1911)—which is a series of religious detective stories!

Besides being the creator of all of these, Chesterton finds time to be a prolific if sometimes too acrobatic newspaperman, a lay preacher in disguise (witness *Orthodoxy* [1908], *What's Wrong with the World* [1910], *The Ball and the Cross* [1909]) and a pamphleteer. He is also—his admirers say, primarily—a poet. His first volume of verse, *The Wild Knight and Other Poems* (1900), a collection of quaintly flavored affirmative verses, was followed by *The Ballad of the White Horse* (1911), one long poem which, in spite of Chesterton's ever-present sermonizing, is possibly the most stirring creation he has achieved. This poem has the vigor, the spontaneity, if not quite the simplicity of the true ballad.

Scarcely less notable is the ringing "Lepanto" from his later, more epigrammatic *Poems* (1915) which, anticipating the clanging verses of Vachel Lindsay's "The Congo," is one of the finest of modern chants. It is interesting to see how the syllables beat, as though on brass; it is thrilling to feel how, in one's pulses, the armies sing, the feet tramp, the drums snarl, and all the tides of marching crusaders roll out of lines like:

> Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,
> Don John of Austria is going to the war;
> Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold
> In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold;
> Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,
> Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon, and he comes. . . .

Subsequent volumes have established the poet's rollicking medievalism, his mingled high spirits and high optimism. *Wine, Water and Song* (1915) and *The Ballad of St. Barbara* (1922) have a humor—and a humanity—that is "at home in the streets and familiar among the stars."

Chesterton seemed to grow more prolific with every year. Two

plays were complete successes: *Magic* (1913) and *Johnson* (1928). *Tales of the Long Bow* (1925) is, as the title implies, a set of incredible short stories. The Father Brown series grew into five volumes, the best of the later ones being *The Incredulity of Father Brown* (1926). His transatlantic visit was recorded in *What I Saw in America* (1922). In an era devoted to quickly assimilated culture in the form of "outlines," he yielded to the fashion—and satirized it—in *The Outline of Sanity* (1926). His colorful *Collected Poems* appeared in 1927. The fantastic exploration of the limbo between reason and insanity—a subject which has always compelled Chesterton—resulted in fictions like *The Return of Don Quixote* (1927) and *The Poet and the Lunatics* (1929).

Chesterton, the prose-paradoxer, is a furiously yea-saying antagonist of a skeptical age. But it is Chesterton the poet who is more likely to outlive his period.

## LEPANTO

White founts falling in the Courts of the sun,
And the Soldan of Byzantium is smiling as they run;
There is laughter like the fountains in that face of all men feared,
It stirs the forest darkness, the darkness of his beard;
It curls the blood-red crescent, the crescent of his lips;
For the inmost sea of all the earth is shaken with his ships.
They have dared the white republics up the capes of Italy,
They have dashed the Adriatic round the Lion of the Sea,
And the Pope has cast his arms abroad for agony and loss,
And called the kings of Christendom for swords about the Cross.
The cold queen of England is looking in the glass;
The shadow of the Valois is yawning at the Mass;
From evening isles fantastical rings faint the Spanish gun,
And the Lord upon the Golden Horn is laughing in the sun.

Dim drums throbbing, in the hills half heard,
Where only on a nameless throne a crownless prince has stirred,
Where, risen from a doubtful seat and half-attainted stall,
The last knight of Europe takes weapons from the wall,
The last and lingering troubadour to whom the bird has sung,
That once went singing southward when all the world was young.

In that enormous silence, tiny and unafraid,
Comes up along a winding road the noise of the Crusade.
Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,
Don John of Austria is going to the war,
Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold
In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold,
Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,
Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon, and he comes.
Don John laughing in the brave beard curled,
Spurning of his stirrups like the thrones of all the world,
Holding his head up for a flag of all the free.
Love-light of Spain—hurrah!
Death-light of Africa!
Don John of Austria
Is riding to the sea.

Mahound is in his paradise above the evening star,
(*Don John of Austria is going to the war.*)
He moves a mighty turban on the timeless houri's knees,
His turban that is woven of the sunsets and the seas.
He shakes the peacock gardens as he rises from his ease,
And he strides among the tree-tops and is taller than the trees;
And his voice through all the garden is a thunder sent to bring
Black Azrael and Ariel and Ammon on the wing.
Giants and the Genii,
Multiplex of wing and eye,
Whose strong obedience broke the sky
When Solomon was king.

They rush in red and purple from the red clouds of the morn,
From the temples where the yellow gods shut up their eyes in scorn;
They rise in green robes roaring from the green hells of the sea
Where fallen skies and evil hues and eyeless creatures be,
On them the sea-valves cluster and the gray sea-forests curl,
Splashed with a splendid sickness, the sickness of the pearl;
They swell in sapphire smoke out of the blue cracks of the ground,—
They gather and they wonder and give worship to Mahound.

And he saith, "Break up the mountains where the hermit-folk
can hide,
And sift the red and silver sands lest bone of saint abide,
And chase the Giaours flying night and day, not giving rest,
For that which was our trouble comes again out of the west.
We have set the seal of Solomon on all things under sun,
Of knowledge and of sorrow and endurance of things done.
But a noise is in the mountains, in the mountains, and I know
The voice that shook our palaces—four hundred years ago:
It is he that saith not 'Kismet'; it is he that knows not Fate;
It is Richard, it is Raymond, it is Godfrey at the gate!
It is he whose loss is laughter when he counts the wager worth,
Put down your feet upon him, that our peace be on the earth."
For he heard drums groaning and he heard guns jar,
(*Don John of Austria is going to the war.*)
Sudden and still—hurrah!
Bolt from Iberia!
Don John of Austria
Is gone by Alcalar.

St. Michael's on his Mountain in the sea-roads of the north
(*Don John of Austria is girt and going forth.*)
Where the gray seas glitter and the sharp tides shift
And the sea-folk labor and the red sails lift.
He shakes his lance of iron and he claps his wings of stone;
The noise is gone through Normandy; the noise is gone alone;
The North is full of tangled things and texts and aching eyes,
And dead is all the innocence of anger and surprise,
And Christian killeth Christian in a narrow dusty room,
And Christian dreadeth Christ that hath a newer face of doom,
And Christian hateth Mary that God kissed in Galilee,—
But Don John of Austria is riding to the sea.
Don John calling through the blast and the eclipse
Crying with the trumpet, with the trumpet to his lips,
Trumpet that sayeth *ha!*
*Domino gloria!*
Don John of Austria
Is shouting to the ships.

King Philip's in his closet with the Fleece about his neck
(*Don John of Austria is armed upon the deck.*)

The walls are hung with velvet that is black and soft as sin,
And little dwarfs creep out of it and little dwarfs creep in.
He holds a crystal phial that has colors like the moon,
He touches, and it tingles, and he trembles very soon,
And his face is as a fungus of a leprous white and gray
Like plants in the high houses that are shuttered from the day,
And death is in the phial and the end of noble work,
But Don John of Austria has fired upon the Turk.
Don John's hunting, and his hounds have bayed—
Booms away past Italy the rumor of his raid.
Gun upon gun, ha! ha!
Gun upon gun, hurrah!
Don John of Austria
Has loosed the cannonade.

The Pope was in his chapel before day or battle broke,
*(Don John of Austria is hidden in the smoke.)*
The hidden room in man's house where God sits all the year,
The secret window whence the world looks small and very dear.
He sees as in a mirror on the monstrous twilight sea
The crescent of his cruel ships whose name is mystery;
They fling great shadows foe-wards, making Cross and Castle dark,
They veil the plumèd lions on the galleys of St. Mark;
And above the ships are palaces of brown, black-bearded chiefs,
And below the ships are prisons, where with multitudinous griefs,
Christian captives, sick and sunless, all a laboring race repines
Like a race in sunken cities, like a nation in the mines.
They are lost like slaves that swat, and in the skies of morning hung
The stair-ways of the tallest gods when tyranny was young.
They are countless, voiceless, hopeless as those fallen or fleeing on
Before the high Kings' horses in the granite of Babylon.
And many a one grows witless in his quiet room in hell
Where a yellow face looks inward through the lattice of his cell,
And he finds his God forgotten, and he seeks no more a sign—
*(But Don John of Austria has burst the battle-line!)*

Don John pounding from the slaughter-painted poop,
Purpling all the ocean like a bloody pirate's sloop,
Scarlet running over on the silvers and the golds,
Breaking of the hatches up and bursting of the holds,
Thronging of the thousands up that labor under sea
White for bliss and blind for sun and stunned for liberty.
*Vivat Hispania!*
*Domino Gloria!*
Don John of Austria
Has set his people free!

Cervantes on his galley sets the sword back in the sheath
(*Don John of Austria rides homeward with a wreath.*)
And he sees across a weary land a straggling road in Spain,
Up which a lean and foolish knight for ever rides in vain,
And he smiles, but not as Sultans smile, and settles back the blade. . . .
(*But Don John of Austria rides home from the Crusade.*)

## A PRAYER IN DARKNESS

This much, O heaven—if I should brood or rave,
Pity me not; but let the world be fed,
Yea, in my madness if I strike me dead,
Heed you the grass that grows upon my grave.

If I dare snarl between this sun and sod,
Whimper and clamor, give me grace to own,
In sun and rain and fruit in season shown,
The shining silence of the scorn of God.

Thank God the stars are set beyond my power,
If I must travail in a night of wrath;
Thank God my tears will never vex a moth,
Nor any curse of mine cut down a flower.

Men say the sun was darkened: yet I had
Thought it beat brightly, even on—Calvary:
And He that hung upon the Torturing Tree
Heard all the crickets singing, and was glad.

## ELEGY IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

The men that worked for England
They have their graves at home;
And bees and birds of England
About the cross can roam.

But they that fought for England,
Following a falling star,
Alas, alas, for England
They have their graves afar.

And they that rule in England
In stately conclave met,
Alas, alas, for England
They have no graves as yet.

## THE DONKEY

When fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood,
Then surely I was born;

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;
One far fierce hour and sweet:
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet!

## THE PRAISE OF DUST

"What of vile dust?" the preacher said.
Methought the whole world woke,
The dead stone lived beneath my foot,
And my whole body spoke.

"You, that play tyrant to the dust,
And stamp its wrinkled face,
This patient star that flings you not
Far into homeless space,

"Come down out of your dusty shrine
The living dust to see,
The flowers that at your sermon's end
Stand blazing silently.

"Rich white and blood-red blossom; stones,
Lichens like fire encrust;
A gleam of blue, a glare of gold,
The vision of the dust.

"Pass them all by: till, as you come
Where, at a city's edge,
Under a tree—I know it well—
Under a lattice ledge,

"The sunshine falls on one brown head.
You, too, O cold of clay,
Eater of stones, may haply hear
The trumpets of that day.

"When God to all his paladins
By his own splendor swore
To make a fairer face than heaven,
Of dust and nothing more."

### WINE AND WATER

Old Noah he had an ostrich farm and fowls on the largest
scale,
He ate his egg with a ladle in an egg-cup big as a pail,
And the soup he took was Elephant Soup, and the fish he
took was Whale,
But they all were small to the cellar he took when he set out
to sail,
And Noah he often said to his wife when he sat down to dine,
"I don't care where the water goes if it doesn't get into the
wine."

The cataract of the cliff of heaven fell blinding off the brink
As if it would wash the stars away as suds go down a sink,
The seven heavens came roaring down for the throats of hell
to drink,
And Noah he cocked his eye and said, "It looks like rain, I
think,
The water has drowned the Matterhorn as deep as a Mendip
mine,
But I don't care where the water goes if it doesn't get into
the wine."

But Noah he sinned, and we have sinned; on tipsy feet we
trod,
Till a great big, black teetotaler was sent to us for a rod,
And you can't get wine at a P. S. A., or chapel, or Eisteddfod.
For the Curse of Water has come again because of the wrath
of God,
And water is on the Bishop's board and the Higher Thinker's
shrine,
But I don't care where the water goes if it doesn't get into
the wine.

### THE HOUSE OF CHRISTMAS

There fared a mother driven forth
  Out of an inn to roam;
In the place where she was homeless
  All men are at home.

The crazy stable close at hand,
With shaking timber and shifting sand,
Grew a stronger thing to abide and stand
Than the square stones of Rome.

For men are homesick in their homes,
And strangers under the sun,
And they lay their heads in a foreign land
Whenever the day is done.
Here we have battle and blazing eyes,
And chance and honor and high surprise;
But our homes are under miraculous skies
Where the yule tale was begun.

A child in a foul stable,
Where the beasts feed and foam;
Only where He was homeless
Are you and I at home;
We have hands that fashion and heads that know,
But our hearts we lost—how long ago!
In a place no chart nor ship can show
Under the sky's dome.

This world is wild as an old wives' tale,
And strange the plain things are,
The earth is enough and the air is enough
For our wonder and our war;
But our rest is as far as the fire-drake swings,
And our peace is put in impossible things
Where clashed and thundered unthinkable wings
Round an incredible star.

To an open house in the evening
Home shall men come,
To an older place than Eden
And a taller town than Rome;
To the end of the way of the wandering star,
To the things that cannot be and that are,
To the place where God was homeless
And all men are at home.

Gordon Bottomley was born at Keighley in 1874 and educated at the Grammar School, Keighley. He is best known as a dramatist, his volumes—and there are ten of them dating from 1904—having elicited high praise upon publication. When the condensed dramas were collected in two volumes, *King Lear's Wife and Other Plays* (1920) and *Gruach and Britain's Daughter* (1921), the tributes were still more enthusiastic. Referring to *Gruach*, which is a portrait of the young Lady Macbeth at the time of her first meeting with the Thane, Lascelles Abercrombie wrote, "It was remarkable enough that Mr. Bottomley should have proved himself capable of worthily inventing a prelude to 'Lear'; it is astonishing that the success should be repeated in a prelude to 'Macbeth.' But it has become clear now that at no time in the history of English poetry since the seventeenth century has the requisite combination of dramatic and poetic talents existed until now in the person of Mr. Bottomley."

His poetry, collected in *Chambers of Imagery, First Series* (1907), *Second Series* (1912), displays the same command of vivid characterization and imaginative vigor one finds in his poetic dramas. What lends technical, if contemporary, interest to both volumes is that they anticipated the effects of the Imagists long before the group created a movement. A comprehensive collection, *Poems of Thirty Years* (1925), synthesizes the combination of force and delicacy which is Bottomley's own. "The End of the World" (which should be read in connection with Abercrombie's play of the same title) is typical, simple in language and extraordinarily supple in rhythm. Here, as in his dramas, the fine intricacies of phrase are paralleled by a knit power of thought.

## THE END OF THE WORLD

The snow had fallen many nights and days;
The sky was come upon the earth at last,
Sifting thinly down as endlessly
As though within the system of blind planets
Something had been forgot or overdriven.
The dawn now seemed neglected in the gray,
Where mountains were unbuilt and shadowless trees
Rootlessly paused or hung upon the air.
There was no wind, but now and then a sigh
Crossed that dry falling dust and rifted it
Through crevices of slate and door and casement.

Perhaps the new moon's time was even past.
Outside, the first white twilights were too void
Until a sheep called once, as to a lamb,
And tenderness crept everywhere from it;
But now the flock must have strayed far away.
The lights across the valley must be veiled,
The smoke lost in the grayness or the dusk.
For more than three days now the snow had thatched
That cow-house roof where it had ever melted
With yellow stains from the beasts' breath inside;
But yet a dog howled there, though not quite lately.
Some one passed down the valley swift and singing,
Yes, with locks spreaded like a son of morning;
But if he seemed too tall to be a man
It was that men had been so long unseen,
Or shapes loom larger through a moving snow.
And he was gone and food had not been given him.
When snow slid from an overweighted leaf
Shaking the tree, it might have been a bird
Slipping in sleep or shelter, whirring wings;
Yet never bird fell out, save once a dead one—
And in two days the snow had covered it.
The dog had howled again—or thus it seemed
Until a lean fox passed and cried no more.
All was so safe indoors where life went on
Glad of the close enfolding snow—O glad
To be so safe and secret at its heart,
Watching the strangeness of familiar things.
They knew not what dim hours went on, went by,
For while they slept the clock stopt newly wound
As the cold hardened. Once they watched the road,
Thinking to be remembered. Once they doubted
If they had kept the sequence of the days,
Because they heard not any sound of bells.
A butterfly, that hid until the Spring
Under a ceiling's shadow, dropt, was dead.
The coldness seemed more nigh, the coldness deepened
As a sound deepens into silences;
It was of earth and came not by the air;
The earth was cooling and drew down the sky.
The air was crumbling. There was no more sky.

Rails of a broken bed charred in the grate,
And when he touched the bars he thought the sting
Came from their heat—he could not feel such cold . . .
She said, "O do not sleep,
Heart, heart of mine, keep near me. No, no; sleep.
I will not lift his fallen, quiet eyelids,
Although I know he would awaken then—
He closed them thus but not of his own will.
He can stay with me while I do not lift them."

## DAWN

A thrush is tapping a stone
With a snail-shell in its beak;
A small bird hangs from a cherry
Until the stem shall break.
No waking song has begun,
And yet birds chatter and hurry
And throng in the elm's gloom
Because an owl goes home.

## EAGER SPRING

Whirl, snow, on the blackbird's chatter;
You will not hinder his song to come.
East wind, sleepless, you cannot scatter
Quince-bud, almond-bud,
Little grape-hyacinth's
Clustering brood.
Nor unfurl the tips of the plum.
No half-born stalk of a lily stops;
There is sap in the storm-torn bush;
And, ruffled by gusts in a snow-blurred copse,
"Pity to wait" sings a thrush.

Love, there are few Springs left for us;
They go, and the count of them as they go
Makes surer the count that is left for us.
More than the East wind, more than the snow,

I would put back these hours that bring
Buds and bees and are lost;
I would hold the night and the frost,
To save for us one more Spring.

## EVELYN UNDERHILL

Evelyn Underhill was born in 1875, educated privately and attended King's College for Women, London, of which she is an Honorary Fellow. In 1921 she became the Upton lecturer on religion at Manchester College, Oxford. Interesting herself chiefly in metaphysical matters, she has written eight books on the inner life. Her volumes *Mysticism* (1911) to *The Mystics of the Church* (1925) have gained her a large following among Theosophists, and she has edited *The Cloud of Unknowing* as well as (with Rabindranath Tagore as collaborator) *The Poems of Kabir*.

Her own volumes of verse are *Immanence* (1913) and *Theophanies* (1916) which, apart from their religious appeal, are cloudy and involved. But in spite of her abstract subjects, Miss Underhill has written a few lyrics which, like the one here reprinted, have won their way into the anthologies of the period.

### THE LADY POVERTY

I met her on the Umbrian hills;
Her hair unbound, her feet unshod.
As one whom secret glory fills
She walked, alone with God.

I met her in the city street:
Oh, changed was all her aspect then!
With heavy eyes and weary feet
She walked alone, with men.

## A. E. COPPARD

A. E. Coppard was born January 4, 1878, at Folkestone, Kent, and has lived all his life in close contact with the soil of which he writes so faithfully. Unknown until 1921, his first volume, *Adam and Eve and Pinch Me*, immediately created an enthusiastic circle of readers on both sides of the Atlantic. *Clorinda Walks in Heaven* (1922) increased the number of his readers, and with *The Black*

*Dog* (1923), *Fishmonger's Fiddle* (1925) and *The Field of Mustard* (1927) his following has grown greatly in size and admiration.

These volumes of short tales vibrate with a prose so pointed and colorful that it is never without the glow of poetry. But Coppard is no less a poet when he writes in rhyme. Two privately printed volumes—*Hips and Haws* (1922) and *Pelagea* (1927)—communicate his half-earthy, half-eerie quality. The latter volume is particularly rich in those concisions which point his prose; landscape and figure are fixed in a few lines. "Betty Perrin" is a common enough figure; Coppard gives her a new dimension. "Winter Field" is another example of the ordinary in terms of the illuminating; it seems scarcely to have been consciously created but always to have existed.

*Collected Poems*, a volume awaited by Coppard's followers, appeared in 1929.

### STAY, O STAY

Of love's designèd joys,
  Dream only, do not speak,
Lest every noting hour
  A separate vengeance take.

Holy is love, but frail
  With love's confined desires,
Against whose chosen urn
  Time like a thief conspires.

Keep silence; love will grow
  In its own darkened air,
A moon whose clouds do make
  Heaven and itself more fair.

### WINTER FIELD

Sorrow on the acres,
  Wind in the thorn,
And an old man plowing
  Through the frosty morn.

A flock of the dark birds,
  Rooks and their wives,
Follow the plow team
  The old man drives;

And troops of starlings,
A-tittle-tat and prim,
Follow the rooks
That follow him.

## BETTY PERRIN

Up the pound path
Long o' Lag Lane,
Lives an old woman
As never saw the rain,
Never saw the sea,
Nor the sun upon the earth:
Poor Betty Perrin,
Blind from her birth!

Chick nor child
Never blessed her day,
Nor a loving man
Ever came her way
With blessings in his heart
And the blarney on his tongue;
Blind was Betty Perrin
Since she was young.

She had sisters nine—
O, such pretty maidies!—
Two went on the town,
But most were decent ladies;
And Betty's pious pride
Bethanked the Lord for that:
Poor Miss Perrin,
Blind as a bat!

Both the saucy sisters
Cherished her and fed,
Bought her beer and skittles
Until they both were dead.
Dying thus so young,
Be sure they died of sin:
Pray, lovely daughters,
Never you begin!

Then the seven sisters
  Put her on the parish,
For they were truly wedded
  And she was hard to nourish.
Betty was a burden,
  A burden from her birth:
It would not hurt the living
  To give her to the earth.

Long o' Lag Lane,
  Up 'ayond the pound,
Still Betty Perrin
  Cumbereth the ground,
Sisterless as Eve
  With the Sword against the Door:
Poor Betty Perrin,
  Blind for evermore!

## THE SLUGGARD

On our last night together
My love rose early:
Come—said my dear—will you not come with me
To see the sun arise?

But I lay still,
Mum as a Christmas lark.
"Will you not come with me?
The clock has struck the hour,
Night wavers and the birds will soon begin."
But I lay a-mumbling:
"There'll be ten thousand dawns before we die;
One dawn is like another;
It is dark and freezing on the wold;
Do not go, I do not care to go;
Lie here and sleep again."

I heard the sharp latch fall as she went forth alone,
Alone to see day break—the last of days—
Beyond the wood, that well of moving shade
From whence all shadows rise;
I heard the latch fall and I could not sleep.

The gold rays slanted on the bedroom wall
When she came back again.
She had seen the couth hills flow into the sky
And the coloring sun glide out of them,
And as the sun soared up—
A blooded hawk from Abyssinia—
The moon came too:
His rose was in the river,
Her lily in the sky.
And O the cowslips nodding in the warren!
And the coney babe no bigger than a purse!
O the enriching beams athwart the wood,
Where the white windflowers hid their timid lips
Pondering, and buds of beech were locked in bronze!

When I arose she set the dishes out,
And cooked a haddock,
And we ate together,
And then she said Good-by;
For she was a stranger,
Wandering far from home:
Good-by, Good-by.
So long, my dear and tender love,
So long.

How often now I go to greet the dawns!
I do not care for them,
It is tiring to rise and go,
And one dawn is much like another,
But I do see them often, often now,
Seeking for what may bless me in her eyes.

I shall see ten thousand dawns before I die.

## THE PRODIGAL SON

When I forsook my homely town
And bade my luck good-by,
The lord of freedom flung me down
His sweet scourge from the sky;

But all the passionate winds ordained
His purpose to fulfill
Blew to a burning goal ungained,
Left me my idle will.

Sad are the harvests I amass,
And empty of all grain;
Thickens the dust upon the grass
No dews shall wash again;
Nought can unclog the unconfined
From pride so falsely kept,
Nor from my void but living mind
May its dead dreams be swept.

Ten thousand finer dreams of sleep,
And old songs sweet to hear,
Mock at my anguish as I keep
My journeying otherwhere;
I would not need one kingly frown,
Or yet bequeath one sigh,
Had I not left my shining town,
Nor bade my heart good-by.

## THOMAS MACDONAGH

Thomas Macdonagh was born in Ireland in 1878. Like his fellow-martyrs, he gave up the promise of a great career to devote himself to the liberation of his country. His poems are few in number, but they are filled with that intensity which made him so striking as a leader of his political group.

In company with his compatriot-poets (see page 615), he was arrested and executed after the Easter Week Rising in Dublin in 1916. The poem "Of a Poet-Patriot," although written to commemorate a fellow-singer, might well serve as his own epitaph.

*The Collected Poems of Thomas MacDonagh* appeared posthumously in 1919. In the introduction, James Stephens wrote, "Here are the poems of a good man; and if, outside of rebellion and violence, you wish to know what his thoughts were like, you will find all his best here."

## OF A POET-PATRIOT

His songs were a little phrase
  Of eternal song.
Drowned in the harping of lays
  More loud and long.

His deed was a single word,
  Called out alone
In a night when no echo stirred
  To laughter or moan.

But his songs new souls shall thrill,
  The loud harps dumb,
And his deed the echoes fill
  When the dawn is come.

## WISHES FOR MY SON

(*Born on St. Cecilia's Day, 1912*)

Now, my son, is life for you,
And I wish you joy of it,—
Joy of power in all you do,
Deeper passion, better wit
Than I had who had enough,
Quicker life and length thereof,
More of every gift but love.

Love I have beyond all men,
Love that now you share with me—
What have I to wish you then
But that you be good and free,
And that God to you may give
Grace in stronger days to live?

For I wish you more than I
Ever knew of glorious deed,
Though no rapture passed me by
That an eager heart could heed,
Though I followed heights and sought
Things the sequel never brought:

Wild and perilous holy things
Flaming with a martyr's blood,
And the joy that laughs and sings
Where a foe must be withstood,
Joy of headlong happy chance
Leading on the battle dance.

But I found no enemy,
No man in a world of wrong.
That Christ's word of charity
Did not render clean and strong—
Who was I to judge my kind,
Blindest groper of the blind?

God to you may give the sight
And the clear undoubting strength,
Wars to knit for single right,
Freedom's war to knit at length,
And to win, through wrath and strife,
To the sequel of my life.

But for you, so small and young,
Born on St. Cecilia's Day,
I in more harmonious song
Now for nearer joys should pray—
Simple joys: the natural growth
Of your childhood and your youth,
Courage, innocence, and truth:

These for you, so small and young,
In your hand and heart and tongue.

## SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN

James Starkey was born in Dublin in 1878. Writing under the pseudonym of Seumas O'Sullivan, he contributed a great variety of prose and verse to various Irish papers. His reputation as a poet began with his appearance in *New Songs*, edited by George Russell ("Æ"). Later, he published *The Twilight People* (1905), *The Earth Lover* (1909), *Poems* (1912), and *Mud and Purple*

(1918). His *Collected Poems* carry an Introduction by Padraic Colum, a selection in *The Bibelot* having been prefaced by "Æ."

### PRAISE

Dear, they are praising your beauty,
The grass and the sky:
The sky in a silence of wonder,
The grass in a sigh.

I too would sing for your praising,
Dearest, had I
Speech as the whispering grass,
Or the silent sky.

These have an art for the praising
Beauty so high.
Sweet, you are praised in a silence,
Sung in a sigh.

### CREDO

I cannot pray, as Christians used to pray,
Before the holy Rood,
Nor on the sacred mysteries seven, as they,
Believing brood.

Nor can I say with those whom pride makes sure,
Our hearts emancipate
Have scorn of ancient symbols that endure
Out-lasting late.

For I have seen Lord Angus in the trees,
And bowing heard
When Spring a lover whispered in their leaves
The living word.

Have known the sun, the wind's sweet agency
And the soft rains that bless
And lead the year through colored pageantry
To fruitfulness.

Yea, by the outstretched hands, the dimming sight,
The piercèd side,
Known when in every bough that shrinks from light
The Lord of life has died.

## EDWARD THOMAS

(Philip) Edward Thomas was born in 1878 and educated at Lincoln College, Oxford. For many years before he turned to verse, Thomas had a large following as a critic and author of travel books, fatiguing biographies, tired pot-boilers. Hating his hack-work, yet unable to get free of it, he had so repressed his creative ability that he had grown doubtful concerning his own power. It needed something foreign to stir and animate what was native in him. So when Robert Frost, the New England poet, went abroad in 1912 for two years and became an intimate of Thomas's, the English critic began to write poetry.

His verse was first published under the pseudonym of "Edward Eastaway" and immediately attracted the attention of a small circle, but (as was the case with his American preceptor) editors were slow to recognize the distinction of his rusticities. Loving, like Frost, the *minutiae* of existence, the quaint and casual turn of ordinary life, he caught the magic of the English countryside in its unpoeticized quietude. Many of his poems are full of a slow, sad contemplation of life and a reflection of its brave futility. It is not exactly disillusion; it is rather an absence of illusion. *Poems* (1917), dedicated to Robert Frost, is full of Thomas's fidelity to little things, things as unglorified as the unfreezing of the "rock-like mud," a child's path, a list of quaint-sounding villages, birds' nests uncovered by the autumn wind, dusty nettles. Whatever the subject, the lines glow with a deep and almost abject reverence for the soil.

Thomas was killed at Arras at an observatory outpost, ironically enough, on Easter Monday, 1917. *Last Poems* (published posthumously in 1919) has less of Frost's idiom (apparent in such poems as "Fifty Faggots," "Tall Nettles," "Haymaking") and more of Thomas's darkening concern. Faithful to a beauty unseen or scorned by others, his heart "floats through the window to a tree down in the misting, quiet vale:

Not like a peewit that returns to wail
For something it has lost, but like a dove
That slants unswerving to its home and love.
There I find my rest, and through the dark air
Flies what yet lives in me. Beauty is there.

This poetry is a constant search for neglected loveliness: the vortex in an eddy of dead leaves, the dying sun in a fading sunflower, the sedgewater's pipe, a music of songlessness:

> Song that lacks all words, all melody,
> All sweetness almost, was dearer to me then
> Than sweetest voice that sings in tune sweet words.

*Collected Poems*, a richly inclusive volume with an Introduction by Walter De la Mare, was published in 1929. Thomas must be reckoned among the most natural—and most English—of nature poets. As De la Mare wrote, "When Edward Thomas was killed in Flanders, a mirror of England was shattered of so pure a crystal that a clearer and tenderer reflection can be found no otherwhere than in these poems." Behind the accuracy of observation there is an emotional tensity, a vision of things seen "not with but through the eye."

## TALL NETTLES

Tall nettles cover up, as they have done
These many springs, the rusty harrow, the plow
Long worn out, and the roller made of stone:
Only the elm butt tops the nettles now.

This corner of the farmyard I like most:
As well as any bloom upon a flower
I like the dust on the nettles, never lost
Except to prove the sweetness of a shower.

## IF I SHOULD EVER BY CHANCE

If I should ever by chance grow rich
I'll buy Codham, Cockridden, and Childerditch,
Roses, Pyrgo, and Lapwater,
And let them all to my elder daughter.
The rent I shall ask of her will be only
Each year's first violets, white and lonely,
The first primroses and orchises—
She must find them before I do, that is.
But if she finds a blossom on furze
Without rent they shall all for ever be hers,
Codham, Cockridden, and Childerditch,
Roses, Pyrgo and Lapwater,—
I shall give them all to my elder daughter.

## COCK-CROW

Out of the wood of thoughts that grows by night
To be cut down by the sharp ax of light,—
Out of the night, two cocks together crow,
Cleaving the darkness with a silver blow:
And bright before my eyes twin trumpeters stand,
Heralds of splendor, one at either hand,
Each facing each as in a coat of arms:—
The milkers lace their boots up at the farms.

## THE PENNY WHISTLE

The new moon hangs like an ivory bugle
In the naked frosty blue;
And the ghylls of the forest, already blackened
By Winter, are blackened anew.

The brooks that cut up and increase the forest,
As if they had never known
The sun, are roaring with black hollow voices
Betwixt rage and a moan.

But still the caravan-hut by the hollies
Like a kingfisher gleams between;
Round the mossed old hearths of the charcoal-burners,
First primroses ask to be seen.

The charcoal-burners are black, but their linen
Blows white on the line;
And white the letter the girl is reading
Under that crescent fine:

And her brother who hides apart in a thicket,
Slowly and surely playing
On a whistle an olden nursery melody,
Says far more than I am saying.

## THE TRUMPET

Rise up, rise up,
And, as the trumpet blowing
Chases the dreams of men,
As the dawn glowing
The stars that left unlit
The land and water,
Rise up and scatter
The dew that covers
The print of last night's lovers—
Scatter it, scatter it!

While you are listening
To the clear horn,
Forget, men, everything
On this earth newborn,
Except that it is lovelier
Than any mysteries.
Open your eyes to the air
That has washed the eyes of stars
Through all the dewy night:
Up with the light,
To the old wars;
Arise, arise!

## DIGGING

Today I think
Only with scents,—scents dead leaves yield,
And bracken and wild carrot's seed,
And the square mustard field;

Odors that rise
When the spade wounds the root of a tree,
Rose, currant, raspberry, or goutweed,
Rhubarb or celery;

The smoke's smell, too,
Flowing from where a bonfire burns
The dead, the waste, the dangerous,
And all to sweetness turns.

It is enough
To smell, to crumble the dark earth,
While the robin sings over again
Sad songs of Autumn mirth.

## OUT IN THE DARK

Out in the dark over the snow
The fallow fawns invisible go
With the fallow doe;
And the winds blow
Fast as the stars are slow.

Stealthily the dark haunts round
And, when a lamp goes, without sound
At a swifter bound
Than the swiftest hound,
Arrives, and all else is drowned;

And I and star and wind and deer,
Are in the dark together,—near,
Yet far,—and fear
Drums on my ear
In that sage company drear.

How weak and little is the light,
All the universe of sight,
Love and delight,
Before the might,
If you love it not, of night.

## GALLOWS

There was a weasel lived in the sun
With all his family,
Till a keeper shot him with his gun
And hung him up on a tree,
Where he swings in the wind and the rain
In the sun and in the snow,
Without pleasure, without pain
On the dead oak tree bough.

There was a crow who was no sleeper,
But a thief and a murderer
Till a very late hour; and this keeper
Made him one of the things that were,
To hang and flap in the rain and wind,
In the sun and in the snow.
There are no more sins to be sinned
On the dead oak tree bough.

There was a magpie, too,
Had a long tongue and a long tail;
He could both talk and do—
But what did that avail?
He, too, flaps in the wind and rain
Alongside weasel and crow.
Without pleasure, without pain,
On the dead oak tree bough.

And many other beasts
And birds, skin, bone and feather,
Have been taken from their feasts
And hung up there together,
To swing and have endless leisure
In the sun and in the snow,
Without pain, without pleasure,
On the dead oak tree bough.

## FIFTY FAGGOTS

There they stand, on their ends, the fifty faggots
That once were underwood of hazel and ash
In Jenny Pink's copse. Now, by the hedge
Close packed they make a thicket fancy alone
Can creep through with the mouse and wren. Next Spring
A blackbird or a robin will nest there,
Accustomed to them, thinking they will remain
Whatever is forever to a bird:
This Spring it is too late; the swift has come.
'Twas a hot day for carrying them up:
Better they will never warm me, though they must

Light several Winters' fires. Before they are done
The war will have ended, many other things
Have ended, maybe, that I can no more
Foresee or more control than robin and wren.

## HAYMAKING

After night's slumber far away had rolled,
The fiery day had a sweet kernel of cold,
And in the perfect blue the clouds uncurled,
Like the first gods before they made the world
And misery, swimming the stormless sea
In beauty and in divine gayety.
The smooth white empty road was lightly strewn
With leaves—the holly's Autumn falls in June—
And fir cones standing stiff up in the heat.
The mill-foot water tumbled white and lit
With tossing crystals, happier than any crowd
Of children pouring out of school aloud.
And in the little thickets where a sleeper
For ever might lie lost, the nettle-creeper
And garden warbler sang unceasingly;
While over them shrill shrieked in his fierce glee
The swift with wings and tail as sharp and narrow
As if the bow had flown off with the arrow.
Only the scent of woodbine and hay new-mown
Traveled the road. In the field sloping down,
Park-like to where its willows showed the brook,
Haymakers rested. The tosser lay forsook
Out in the sun; and the long wagon stood
Without its team, it seemed it never would
Move from the shadow of that single yew.
The team, as still, until their task was due,
Beside the laborers enjoyed the shade
That three squat oaks mid field together made
Upon a circle of grass and weed uncut,
And on the hollow, once a chalk-pit, but
Now brimmed with nut and elder-flower so clean.
The men leaned on their rakes, about to begin,
But still. And all were silent. All was old,
This morning time, with a great age untold,

Older than Clare and Cobbett, Morland and Crome,
Than, at the field's far edge, the farmer's home,
A white house crouched at the foot of a great tree.
Under the heavens that know not what years be
The men, the beasts, the trees, the implements
Uttered even what they will in times far hence—
All of us gone out of the reach of change—
Immortal in a picture of an old grange.

## JOHN MASEFIELD

John Masefield was born June 1, 1878, in Ledbury, Herefordshire. Although the son of a lawyer, he went to sea at an early age and became a wanderer for several years. At one time, in 1895, to be exact, he worked for a few months as a sort of third assistant barkeeper in Luke O'Connor's saloon, the Columbia Hotel, in New York City. The place is still there on the corner of Sixth and Greenwich Avenues. In 1897, he returned to England where he made friends with Synge in London, living, for a time, in Bloomsbury. The Royal Society of Literature awarded him the Edmond de Polignac prize for poetry in 1912. During the war, Masefield made a lecture tour in America in 1916. Since that time, he has had his home at Boar's Hill, near Oxford.

The results of his wanderings showed in his early works, *Salt-Water Ballads* (1902), *Ballads* (1903), frank, often crude but always rightly measured poems of sailors written in their own dialect, and *A Mainsail Haul* (1905), a collection of short nautical stories. In these books Masefield possibly overemphasized passion and brutality, yet, underneath the violence, he captured that highly colored realism which is the poetry of life. But all of Masefield is not fortissimo. He has sounded notes as lightly satiric as "Cargoes," as solemnly restrained as "The Choice," as quietly unaffected—and affecting—as "C. L. M.," that universal tribute.

It was not until he published *The Everlasting Mercy* (1911) that he became famous. Followed quickly by those remarkable long narrative poems, *The Widow in the Bye Street* (1912), *Dauber* (1912), and *The Daffodil Fields* (1913), all of these works vibrate with a blend of physical exulting and spiritual exaltation that is so striking, and so typical of Masefield. Their very rudeness is lifted to a plane of religious intensity. (See Preface.) Pictorially, Masefield is even more telling. The finest moment in *The Widow in the Bye Street* is the portrayal of the mother alone in her cottage; the public-house scene and the passage describing

the birds following the plow are the most intense touches in *The Everlasting Mercy*. Nothing more vigorous or contagious than the description of the storm at sea in *Dauber* has appeared in current literature; "The Wanderer" is perhaps the most persuasive sea-poem in modern English.

The war, in which Masefield served with the Red Cross in France and on the Gallipoli peninsula (of which campaign he wrote a study for the government), softened his style; *Good Friday and Other Poems* (1916) is as restrained and dignified a collection as that of any of his contemporaries.

*Reynard the Fox* (1919) and *Right Royal* (1920) attempt a return to the early vigor. But the attempt is too evident; a sense of strain pervades the too-packed, too-rapidly propelled stanzas. Influenced by Chaucer (Masefield says he first took to writing after reading the *Parliament of Fowls*) they are marred by their excesses. "There is," says Middleton Murry, speaking of the former, "in Chaucer, a naturalness, a lack of emphasis, a confidence that the object will not fail to make its own impression, beside which Mr. Masefield's demonstration and underlining seem almost *malsain* . . . tainted by the desperate *bergerie* of the Georgian era. Chaucer is at home with his speech and at home with his world; by his side Mr. Masefield seems nervous and uncertain about both." But though the Chaucerian influence is obvious, it is not wholly a handicap to Masefield; it stimulates him to overcome a nostalgia, roused (if overanimated) by the English countryside.

Compared to his almost frenetic verse, Masefield's fictions are conventional. The later novels gather speed, but even *Sard Harker* (1924), *Odtaa* (1926) and *The Midnight Folk* (1927), for all their surface differences, are little more than perfunctory. His books for boys are scarcely more enlivening. His plays come nearer the heart of the poet, although the influence of Synge, Shakespeare and Hardy can be traced. The early dramas, unlike the early novels, are his best: *The Tragedy of Nan* (1909), *The Tragedy of Pompey the Great* (1910) and *The Faithful* (1915) are far superior to his adaptations of Racine, his revamping of *Tristan and Isolt* (1927) or the dignified but dull *Coming of Christ* (1928).

Among Masefield's essays, *William Shakespeare* (1911) remains his most creative critique, the author returning to the subject in *Shakespeare and Spiritual Life* (1924).

*Collected Poems* (1923) is, both in quantity and quality, a remarkable showing for a poet in his mid-forties. It was followed by *Midsummer Night* (1928) in which Masefield returned, with a fine narrative sweep, to his best stride and his true manner.

Following the death of Bridges, Masefield was appointed Poet Laureate in 1930.

## A CONSECRATION

Not of the princes and prelates with periwigged charioteers
Riding triumphantly laureled to lap the fat of the years,—
Rather the scorned—the rejected—the men hemmed in with the spears;

The men of the tattered battalion which fights till it dies,
Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din and the cries.
The men with the broken heads and the blood running into their eyes.

Not the be-medaled Commander, beloved of the throne,
Riding cock-horse to parade when the bugles are blown,
But the lads who carried the koppie and cannot be known.

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the tramp of the road,
The slave with the sack on his shoulders pricked on with the goad,
The man with too weighty a burden, too weary a load.

The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man with the clout,
The chantyman bent at the halliards putting a tune to the shout,
The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired look-out.

Others may sing of the wine and the wealth and the mirth,
The portly presence of potentates goodly in girth;—
Mine be the dirt and the dross, the dust and scum of the earth!

Theirs be the music, the color, the glory, the gold;
Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of mold.
Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in the rain and the cold—
Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my tales be told.

AMEN.

## SEA-FEVER

I must down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,

And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's
shaking,
And a gray mist on the sea's face and a gray dawn breaking.

I must down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls
crying.

I must down to the seas again to the vagrant gypsy life.
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a
whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

## A WANDERER'S SONG

A wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels,
I am tired of brick and stone and rumbling wagon-wheels;
I hunger for the sea's edge, the limits of the land,
Where the wild old Atlantic is shouting on the sand.

Oh I'll be going, leaving the noises of the street,
To where a lifting foresail-foot is yanking at the sheet;
To a windy, tossing anchorage where yawls and ketches ride,
Oh I'll be going, going, until I meet the tide.

And first I'll hear the sea-wind, the mewing of the gulls,
The clucking, sucking of the sea about the rusty hulls,
The songs at the capstan in the hooker warping out,
And then the heart of me'll know I'm there or thereabout.

Oh I am sick of brick and stone, the heart of me is sick,
For windy green, unquiet sea, the realm of Moby Dick;
And I'll be going, going, from the roaring of the wheels,
For a wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels.

## SORROW OF MYDATH

Weary the cry of the wind is, weary the sea,
Weary the heart and the mind and the body of me.

Would I were out of it, done with it, would I could be
A white gull crying along the desolate sands!

Outcast, derelict soul in a body accurst,
Standing drenched with the spindrift, standing athirst,
For the cool green waves of death to arise and burst
In a tide of quiet for me on the desolate sands!

Would that the waves and the long white hair of the spray
Would gather in splendid terror and blot me away
To the sunless place of the wrecks where the waters sway
Gently, dreamily, quietly over desolate sands!

## TOMORROW

Oh yesterday the cutting edge drank thirstily and deep,
The upland outlaws ringed us in and herded us as sheep,
They drove us from the stricken field and bayed us into keep;
But tomorrow,
By the living God, we'll try the game again!

Oh yesterday our little troop was ridden through and through,
Our swaying, tattered pennons fled, a broken, beaten few,
And all a summer afternoon they hunted us and slew;
But tomorrow,
By the living God, we'll try the game again!

And here upon the turret-top the bale-fire glowers red,
The wake-lights burn and drip about our hacked, disfigured dead,
And many a broken heart is here and many a broken head;
But tomorrow,
By the living God, we'll try the game again!

## ROUNDING THE HORN

(*From "Dauber"*)

Then came the cry of "Call all hands on deck!"
The Dauber knew its meaning; it was come:
Cape Horn, that tramples beauty into wreck,
And crumples steel and smites the strong man dumb.

Down clattered flying kites and staysails; some
Sang out in quick, high calls: the fair-leads skirled,
And from the south-west came the end of the world . . .

"Lay out!" the Bosun yelled. The Dauber laid
Out on the yard, gripping the yard, and feeling
Sick at the mighty space of air displayed
Below his feet, where mewing birds were wheeling.
A giddy fear was on him; he was reeling.
He bit his lip half through, clutching the jack.
A cold sweat glued the shirt upon his back.

The yard was shaking, for a brace was loose.
He felt that he would fall; he clutched, he bent,
Clammy with natural terror to the shoes
While idiotic promptings came and went.
Snow fluttered on a wind-flaw and was spent;
He saw the water darken. Some one yelled,
"Frap it; don't stay to furl! Hold on!" He held.

Darkness came down—half darkness—in a whirl;
The sky went out, the waters disappeared.
He felt a shocking pressure of blowing hurl
The ship upon her side. The darkness speared
At her with wind; she staggered, she careered;
Then down she lay. The Dauber felt her go,
He saw her yard tilt downwards. Then the snow

Whirled all about—dense, multitudinous, cold—
Mixed with the wind's one devilish thrust and shriek,
Which whiffled out men's tears, defeated, took hold,
Flattening the flying drift against the cheek.
The yards buckled and bent, man could not speak.
The ship lay on her broadside; the wind's sound
Had devilish malice at having got her downed.

How long the gale had blown he could not tell,
Only the world had changed, his life had died.
A moment now was everlasting hell.
Nature an onslaught from the weather side,
A withering rush of death, a frost that cried,

Shrieked, till he withered at the heart; a hail
Plastered his oilskins with an icy mail. . . .

"Up!" yelled the Bosun; "up and clear the wreck!"
The Dauber followed where he led; below
He caught one giddy glimpsing of the deck
Filled with white water, as though heaped with snow.
He saw the streamers of the rigging blow
Straight out like pennons from the splintered mast,
Then, all sense dimmed, all was an icy blast.

Roaring from nether hell and filled with ice,
Roaring and crashing on the jerking stage,
An utter bridle given to utter vice,
Limitless power mad with endless rage
Withering the soul; a minute seemed an age.
He clutched and hacked at ropes, at rags of sail,
Thinking that comfort was a fairy tale,

Told long ago—long, long ago—long since
Heard of in other lives—imagined, dreamed—
There where the basest beggar was a prince.
To him in torment where the tempest screamed,
Comfort and warmth and ease no longer seemed
Things that a man could know; soul, body, brain,
Knew nothing but the wind, the cold, the pain.

## C. L. M.

In the dark womb where I began
My mother's life made me a man.
Through all the months of human birth
Her beauty fed my common earth.
I cannot see, nor breathe, nor stir,
But through the death of some of her.

Down in the darkness of the grave
She cannot see the life she gave.
For all her love, she cannot tell
Whether I use it ill or well,
Nor knock at dusty doors to find
Her beauty dusty in the mind.

If the grave's gates could be undone,
She would not know her little son,
I am so grown. If we should meet,
She would pass by me in the street,
Unless my soul's face let her see
My sense of what she did for me.

What have I done to keep in mind
My debt to her and womankind?
What woman's happier life repays
Her for those months of wretched days?
For all my mouthless body leech'd
Ere Birth's releasing hell was reach'd?

What have I done, or tried, or said
In thanks to that dear woman dead?
Men triumph over women still,
Men trample women's rights at will,
And man's lust roves the world untamed.
. . . . .
O grave, keep shut lest I be shamed.

## CARGOES

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke-stack
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rail, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

## CAPTAIN STRATTON'S FANCY

Oh some are fond of red wine, and some are fond of white,
And some are all for dancing in the pale moonlight;
But rum alone's the tipple and the heart's delight
Of the old bold mate of Henry Morgan.

Oh some are fond of Spanish wine, and some are fond of French,
And some'll swallow tay and stuff fit only for a wench;
But I'm for right Jamaica till I roll beneath the bench,
Says the old bold mate of Henry Morgan.

Oh some are for the lily, and some are for the rose,
But I am for the sugar-cane that in Jamaica grows;
For it's that makes the bonny drink to warm my copper nose,
Says the old bold mate of Henry Morgan.

Oh some are fond of fiddles and a song well sung,
And some are all for music for to lilt upon the tongue;
But mouths were made for tankards, and for sucking at the bung,
Says the old bold mate of Henry Morgan.

And some are fond of dancing, and some are fond of dice,
And some are all for red lips and pretty lasses' eyes;
But a right Jamaica puncheon is a finer prize
To the old bold mate of Henry Morgan.

Oh some that's good and godly ones they hold that it's a sin
To troll the jolly bowl around and let the dollars spin;
But I'm for toleration and for drinking at an inn,
Says the old bold mate of Henry Morgan.

Oh some are sad and wretched folk that go in silken suits,
And there's a mort of wicked rogues that live in good reputes;
So I'm for drinking honestly, and dying in my boots,
Like an old bold mate of Henry Morgan.

## SONNET

Is there a great green commonwealth of Thought
Which ranks the yearly pageant, and decides
How Summer's royal progress shall be wrought,
By secret stir which in each plant abides?
Does rocking daffodil consent that she,
The snowdrop of wet winters, shall be first?
Does spotted cowslip with the grass agree
To hold her pride before the rattle burst?
And in the hedge what quick agreement goes,
When hawthorn blossoms redden to decay,
That Summer's pride shall come, the Summer's rose,
Before the flower be on the bramble spray?
Or is it, as with us, unresting strife,
And each consent a lucky gasp for life?

## ON GROWING OLD

Be with me, Beauty, for the fire is dying;
My dog and I are old, too old for roving.
Man, whose young passion sets the spindrift flying,
Is soon too lame to march, too cold for loving.
I take the book and gather to the fire,
Turning old yellow leaves; minute by minute
The clock ticks to my heart. A withered wire,
Moves a thin ghost of music in the spinet.
I cannot sail your seas, I cannot wander
Your cornland, nor your hill-land, nor your valleys
Ever again, nor share the battle yonder
Where the young knight the broken squadron rallies.
Only stay quiet while my mind remembers
The beauty of fire from the beauty of embers.

Beauty have pity! for the strong have power,
The rich their wealth, the beautiful their grace,
Summer of man its sunlight and its flower.
Spring-time of man all April in a face.
Only, as in the jostling in the Strand,
Where the mob thrusts or loiters or is loud,
The beggar with the saucer in his hand
Asks only a penny from the passing crowd,

So, from this glittering world with all its fashion,
Its fire, and play of men, its stir, its march,
Let me have wisdom, Beauty, wisdom and passion,
Bread to the soul, rain when the summers parch.
Give me but these, and though the darkness close
Even the night will blossom as the rose.

## LAUGH AND BE MERRY

Laugh and be merry, remember, better the world with a song,
Better the world with a blow in the teeth of a wrong.
Laugh, for the time is brief, a thread the length of a span.
Laugh, and be proud to belong to the old proud pageant of man.

Laugh and be merry: remember, in olden time,
God made Heaven and Earth for joy He took in a rhyme,
Made them, and filled them full with the strong red wine of His mirth,
The splendid joy of the stars: the joy of the earth.

So we must laugh and drink from the deep blue cup of the sky,
Join the jubilant song of the great stars sweeping by,
Laugh, and battle, and work, and drink of the wine outpoured
In the dear green earth, the sign of the joy of the Lord.

Laugh and be merry together, like brothers akin,
Guesting awhile in the rooms of a beautiful inn,
Glad till the dancing stops, and the lilt of the music ends.
Laugh till the game is played; and be you merry, my friends.

## THE CHOICE

The Kings go by with jeweled crowns;
Their horses gleam, their banners shake, their spears are many.
The sack of many-peopled towns
Is all their dream:
The way they take
Leaves but a ruin in the brake,
And, in the furrow that the plowmen make,
A stampless penny; a tale, a dream.

The Merchants reckon up their gold,
Their letters come, their ships arrive, their freights are glories:
The profits of their treasures sold
They tell and sum;
Their foremen drive
Their servants, starved to half-alive,
Whose labors do but make the earth a hive
Of stinking stories; a tale, a dream.

The Priests are singing in their stalls,
Their singing lifts, their incense burns, their praying clamors;
Yet God is as the sparrow falls,
The ivy drifts;
The votive urns
Are all left void when Fortune turns,
The god is but a marble for the kerns
To break with hammers; a tale, a dream.

O Beauty, let me know again
The green earth cold, the April rain, the quiet waters figuring sky,
The one star risen.
So shall I pass into the feast
Not touched by King, Merchant, or Priest;
Know the red spirit of the beast,
Be the green grain;
Escape from prison.

## LORD DUNSANY

Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, Lord Dunsany, the eighteenth Baron of his line, with estates in Meath, Ireland, and in Kent, was born July 24, 1878, and was educated at Eton and Sandhurst. He is best known as an author of fantastic fairy tales and still more fantastic plays. *The Gods of the Mountain* (1911) and *The Golden Doom* (1912) are highly dramatic and intensely poetic. *A Night at an Inn* (1916) is that peculiar novelty, an eerie and plausible melodrama.

Dunsany's prime quality is a highly colored imagination rich in symbolism. This symbolism, part modern, part Oriental, shows itself in situation, in the juxtaposition of the grotesque and the

casual, even in the employment of curious fictitious names. *Five Plays* (1914) and *Plays of Gods and Men* (1917) include the best of Dunsany's one-acters.

After the World War, in which the playwright served as captain in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, Dunsany visited America and revised the reissue of his early tales and prose poems collected in his *The Book of Wonder*, originally published in 1912, following this with *The Last Book of Wonder* (1916), *Unhappy Far-off Things* and *The King of Elfland's Daughter* (1924).

*Fifty Poems* (1930) is marred by too great an amount of occasional verse. Most of it seems the product of a mind whose edge is by no means dull but whose emotions are remembered in too tranquil a tranquillity. But the Dunsany touch is not wholly lacking. "The Watchers," for all its resemblance to De la Mare's "The Listeners," is one of the best moments in the volume, and "Snow on the East Wind" is an apt and imagistic picturing of the dying down of the wind with the coming of snow.

### SNOW ON THE EAST WIND

A black horse came to visit us,
  His hooves on the hills drumming
All the way from the Caucasus,
  And was three days coming.

On his back was a lady light,
  And cruelly did she ride him.
He dropped dead at our doors by night
  As she softly stepped from astride him.

### SONGS FROM AN EVIL WOOD

I

There is no wrath in the stars,
  They do not rage in the sky;
I look from the evil wood
  And find myself wondering why.

Why do they not scream out
  And grapple star against star,
Seeking for blood in the wood
  As all things round me are?

They do not glare like the sky
  Or flash like the deeps of the wood;
But they shine softly on
  In their sacred solitude.

To their high, happy haunts
  Silence from us has flown,
She whom we loved of old
  And know it now she is gone.

When will she come again,
  Though for one second only?
She whom we loved is gone
  And the whole world is lonely.

II

Somewhere lost in the haze
  The sun goes down in the cold,
And birds in this evil wood
  Chirrup home as of old;

Chirrup, stir and are still,
  On the high twigs frozen and thin.
There is no more noise of them now,
  And the long night sets in.

Of all the wonderful things
  That I have seen in the wood
I marvel most at the birds
  And their wonderful quietude.

For a giant smites with his club
  All day the tops of the hill,
Sometimes he rests at night,
  Oftener he beats them still.

And a dwarf with a grim black mane
  Raps with repeated rage
All night in the valley below
  On the wooden walls of his cage.

And the elder giants come
  Sometimes, tramping from far
Through the weird and flickering light
  Made by an earthly star.

And the giant with his club,
  And the dwarf with rage in his breath,
And the elder giants from far,
  They are all the children of Death.

They are all abroad tonight
  And are breaking the hills with their brood,—
And the birds are all asleep
  Even in Plug Street Wood!

III

I met with Death in his country,
  With his scythe and his hollow eye
Walking the roads of Belgium.
  I looked and he passed me by.

Since he passed me by in Plug Street,
  In the wood of the evil name,
I shall not now lie with the heroes,
  I shall not share their fame;

I shall never be as they are,
  A name in the lands of the Free,
Since I looked on Death in Flanders
  And he did not look at me.

## HAROLD MONRO

Harold Monro was born in Brussels in 1879 and educated at Caius College, Cambridge. He describes himself as "author, publisher, editor and book-seller." Monro founded The Poetry Bookshop in London in 1912, a unique establishment having as its

object a practical relation between poetry and the public, and keeping in stock nothing but poetry, the drama, and books connected with these subjects. His quarterly, *Poetry and Drama* (discontinued during the war and revived in 1919 as *The Chapbook*), was in a sense the organ of the younger men; and his shop, in which he has lived for the last score years except while he was in the army, became a literary center.

Monro's poetry depicts the play between the world of reality and the limbo of fantasy. *Before Dawn* (1911) has little of his peculiar mysticism, but *Children of Love* (1914), *Trees* (1915) and *Strange Meetings* (1917) present, with indubitable originality, the relation of man, not only to the earth he rose from, but to the inanimate things among which he moves. Even the most whimsical of this poet's concepts disclose an emotional intensity beneath its skillful rhythms. Monro's kettles are as animated as his cats; his machines, domestic furniture, ordinary interiors are both surprising and natural—surprising in the revelation of what might well be their "inner selves," natural in the way their speech is communicated.

Monro has been criticized as being a poet by intention, but not a singer by intuition. Defending certain of the more determined "modernist" poets—and, by implication, himself—Monro has written, "It will be no use to say that their poetry 'does not sing.' It is not meant to. The word *Song* has been abandoned and swept out, with *Ode, Sonnet, Quatrain,* and other similar verbal lumber. The test of intellect is more important to them than tests of prosody, or tradition. The passing event and its effect on the mind is everything to them. . . . Thus they think in terms of the whole poem rather than of the single line, and thus they are often unquotable except in *extenso.*" While this is interesting (and partially true) Monro's own poetry is at its best when intellect is subservient to imagination.

*Real Property* (1922) represents a further advance. Although Monro has not lost his whimsical appraisal of "still life," the note is graver, the implications larger. Some of the poems, as Monro states in a prefatory note, are "tainted with slight Georgian affectations." But such verses as the metaphysical "Earthliness" (too long for quotation) and the simpler poems of Part Two, three of which are reprinted in the group below, mark this poet as one of the most original though, undeservedly, one of the least popular creators of the period.

*The Earth for Sale* (1928) is a continuation and extension of the more somber speculations. Besides his poetry, Monro is the author of *Some Contemporary Poets* (1920), a set of sharply critical estimates.

## EVERY THING

Since man has been articulate,
Mechanical, improvidently wise
(Servant of Fate),
He has not understood the little cries
And foreign conversations of the small
Delightful creatures that have followed him
Not far behind;
Has failed to hear the sympathetic call
Of Crockery and Cutlery, those kind
Reposeful Teraphim
Of his domestic happiness; the Stool
He sat on, or the Door he entered through:
He has not thanked them, overbearing fool!
What is he coming to?

But you should listen to the talk of these.
Honest they are, and patient they have kept;
Served him without his Thank you or his Please . . .
I often heard
The gentle Bed, a sigh between each word,
Murmuring, before I slept.
The Candle, as I blew it, cried aloud,
Then bowed,
And in a smoky argument
Into the darkness went.
The Kettle puffed a tentacle of breath:—
"Pooh! I have boiled his water, I don't know
Why; and he always says I boil too slow.
He never calls me 'Sukie, dear,' and oh,
I wonder why I squander my desire
Sitting submissive on his kitchen fire."

Now the old Copper Basin suddenly
Rattled and tumbled from the shelf,
Bumping and crying: "I can fall by myself;
Without a woman's hand

To patronize and coax and flatter me,
I understand
The lean and poise of gravitable land."
It gave a raucous and tumultuous shout,
Twisted itself convulsively about,
Rested upon the floor, and, while I stare,
It stares and grins at me.

The old impetuous Gas above my head
Begins irascibly to flare and fret,
Wheezing into its epileptic jet,
Reminding me I ought to go to bed.

The rafters creak; an Empty-Cupboard door
Swings open; now a wild Plank of the floor
Breaks from its joist, and leaps behind my foot.
Down from the chimney, half a pound of Soot
Tumbles and lies, and shakes itself again.
The Putty cracks against the window-pane.
A piece of Paper in the basket shoves
Another piece, and toward the bottom moves.
My independent Pencil, while I write,
Breaks at the point: the ruminating Clock
Stirs all its body and begins to rock,
Warning the waiting presence of the Night,
Strikes the dead hour, and tumbles to the plain
Ticking of ordinary work again.

You do well to remind me, and I praise
Your strangely individual foreign ways.
You call me from myself to recognize
Companionship in your unselfish eyes.
I want your dear acquaintances, although
I pass you arrogantly over, throw
Your lovely sounds, and squander them along
My busy days. I'll do you no more wrong.

Purr for me, Sukie, like a faithful cat.
You, my well-trampled Boots, and you, my Hat,
Remain my friends: I feel, though I don't speak,
Your touch grow kindlier from week to week.

It well becomes our mutual happiness
To go toward the same end more or less.
There is not much dissimilarity,
Not much to choose, I know it well, in fine,
Between the purposes of you and me,
And your eventual Rubbish Heap, and mine.

## CITY-STORM

The heavy sounds are over-sweet
That droop above the hooded street,
At any moment ripe to fall and lie,
And when the Wind will swagger up the town
They'll bend a moment, then will fly
All clattering down.

Troupes come and go of urchin breeze:
They flick your face or smack the trees,
Then round the corner spin and leap
With whistling cries,
Rake their rubbish in a heap
And throw it in your eyes.

(Much preparation of the earth and air
Is needed everywhere
Before that first large drop of rain can fall.)

Smells of the Sea, or inland Grass,
Come staring through the town and pass.
Brilliant old Memories drive in state
Along the way, but cannot wait;
And many a large unusual bird
Hovers across the sky, half-heard.

But listen. It is He;
At last he comes:
Gigantic tyrant panting through the street,
Slamming the windows of our little homes,
Banging the doors, knocking the chimneys down.
Oh, his loud tramp: how scornfully he can meet
Great citizens, and lash them with his sleet!
Everything will be altered in our town.

He'll wipe the film of habit clean away,
While he remains,
His cloak is over everything we do,
And the whole town complains:—

A somber scroll;
An inner room.
A crystal bowl:
Waters of gloom.
Oh, the darkened house—
Into silence creep!
The world is cold.
All people weep.

## SOLITUDE

When you have tidied all things for the night,
And while your thoughts are fading to their sleep,
You'll pause a moment in the late firelight,
Too sorrowful to weep.

The large and gentle furniture has stood
In sympathetic silence all the day
With that old kindness of domestic wood;
Nevertheless the haunted room will say:
"Some one must be away."

The little dog rolls over half awake,
Stretches his paws, yawns, looking up at you,
Wags his tail very slightly for your sake,
That you may feel he is unhappy too.

A distant engine whistles, or the floor
Creaks, or the wandering night-wind bangs a door.

Silence is scattered like a broken glass.
The minutes prick their ears and run about,
Then one by one subside again and pass
Sedately in, monotonously out.

You bend your head and wipe away a tear.
Solitude walks one heavy step more near.

## CHILDREN OF LOVE

The holy boy
Went from his mother out in the cool of day
Over the sun-parched fields
And in among the olives shining green and shining gray.

There was no sound,
No smallest voice of any shivering stream.
Poor sinless little boy,
He desired to play, and to sing; he could only sigh and dream.

Suddenly came
Running along to him naked, with curly hair,
That rogue of the lovely world,
That other beautiful child whom the virgin Venus bare.

The holy boy
Gazed with those sad blue eyes that all men know.
Impudent Cupid stood
Panting, holding an arrow and pointing his bow.

("Will you not play?
Jesus, run to him, run to him, swift for our joy.
Is he not holy, like you?
Are you afraid of his arrows, O beautiful dreaming boy?")

And now they stand
Watching one another with timid gaze;
Youth has met youth in the wood,
But holiness will not change its melancholy ways.

Cupid at last
Draws his bow and softly lets fly a dart.
Smile for a moment, sad world!—
It has grazed the white skin and drawn blood from the sorrowful heart.

Now for delight,
Cupid tosses his locks and goes wantonly near;
But the child that was born to the cross
Has let fall on his cheek, for the sadness of life, a compassionate tear.

Marvelous dream!
Cupid has offered his arrows for Jesus to try;
He has offered his bow for the game,
But Jesus went weeping away, and left him there wondering why.

## DOG

O little friend, your nose is ready; you sniff,
Asking for that expected walk,
(Your nostrils full of the happy rabbit-whiff)
And almost talk.

And so the moment becomes a moving force;
Coats glide down from their pegs in the humble dark;
You scamper the stairs,
Your body informed with the scent and the track and the mark
Of stoats and weasels, moles and badgers and hares.

We are going *Out*. You know the pitch of the word,
Probing the tone of thought as it comes through fog
And reaches by devious means (half-smelt, half-heard)
The four-legged brain of a walk-ecstatic dog.

*Out* through the garden your head is already low.
You are going your walk, you know,
And your limbs will draw
Joy from the earth through the touch of your padded paw.

Now, sending a look to us behind,
Who follow slowly the track of your lovely play,
You fetch our bodies forward away from mind
Into the light and fun of your useless day.

. . . . . .

Thus, for your walk, we took ourselves, and went
Out by the hedge, and tree, to the open ground.
You ran, in delightful strata of wafted scent,
Over the hill without seeing the view;
Beauty is hinted through primitive smells to you:
And that ultimate Beauty you track is but rarely found.

. . . . . .

Home . . . and further joy will be waiting there:
Supper full of the lovely taste of bone,
You lift up your nose again, and sniff, and stare
For the rapture known
Of the quick wild gorge of food, then the still lie-down;
While your people will talk above you in the light
Of candles, and your dreams will merge and drown
Into the bed-delicious hours of night.

## MAN CARRYING BALE

The tough hand closes gently on the load;
  Out of the mind a voice
Calls "Lift!" and the arms, remembering well their work,
  Lengthen and pause for help.
Then a slow ripple flows along the body,
While all the muscles call to one another:
  "Lift!" and the bulging bale
  Floats like a butterfly in June.

So moved the earliest carrier of bales,
  And the same watchful sun
Glowed through his body feeding it with light.
  So will the last one move,
And halt, and dip his head, and lay his load
Down, and the muscles will relax and tremble . . .
  Earth, you designed your man
Beautiful both in labor and repose.

## THE NIGHTINGALE NEAR THE HOUSE

Here is the soundless cypress on the lawn:
It listens, listens. Taller trees beyond
Listen. The moon at the unruffled pond
    Stares. And you sing, you sing.

That star-enchanted song falls through the air
From lawn to lawn down terraces of sound,
Darts in white arrows on the shadowed ground;
    And all the night you sing.

My dreams are flowers to which you are a bee
As all night long I listen, and my brain
Receives your song; then loses it again
In moonlight on the lawn.

Now is your voice a marble high and white,
Then like a mist on fields of paradise,
Now is a raging fire, then is like ice,
Then breaks, and it is dawn.

## W. W. GIBSON

W(ilfrid) W(ilson) Gibson was born in 1880 at Hexham, Northumberland and, by his forty-eighth year, was the author of some nineteen books of poems and five volumes of poetic plays and dialogues. The first five or six of these (see Preface) were pseudo-Tennysonian; imitative in manner and sentimentally romantic in tone. Their titles give the key: *Urlyn the Harper* (1902), *The Queen's Vigil* (1902), *The Golden Helm* (1903), *The Nets of Love* (1905).

With *Daily Bread* (1910), *Fires* (1912) and *Borderlands* (1914) Gibson executed a complete right-about-face and, with dramatic brevity, wrote a series of poems mirroring the dreams, pursuits and fears of common humanity. *Thoroughfares* (1914) marks an advance in technique and power. And though in *Livelihood* (1917) Gibson seems to be theatricalizing and merely exploiting his working-people, several of his later lyrics recapture the veracity of such memorable poems as "The Old Man," "The Stone" and "The Machine." *Hill-Tracks* (1918) attempts to hold (as Thomas actually did hold) the beauty of village-names through the glamour of the English countryside. *Neighbours* (1920) again takes up the strain of a somewhat too conscious poeticizing of the casual.

Gibson's later work suffers from his facility; a thinning out of power, even of feeling, is evident in *Krindlesyke* (1922), *Kestrel Edge* (1924) and *I Heard a Sailor* (1925). The best of Gibson is in the first *Collected Poems* (1923), a further *Collected Poems, 1905-1925*, having been published in 1926.

### PRELUDE

As one, at midnight, wakened by the call
Of golden-plovers in their seaward flight,
Who lies and listens, as the clear notes fall
Through tingling silence of the frosty night—

Who lies and listens, till the last note fails,
And then, in fancy, faring with the flock
Far over slumbering hills and dreaming dales,
Soon hears the surges break on reef and rock;
And, hearkening, till all sense of self is drowned
Within the mightier music of the deep,
No more remembers the sweet piping sound
That startled him from dull, undreaming sleep;
So I, first waking from oblivion, heard,
With heart that kindled to the call of song,
The voice of young life, fluting like a bird,
And echoed that light lilting; till, ere long,
Lured onward by that happy, singing-flight,
I caught the stormy summons of the sea,
And dared the restless deeps that, day and night,
Surge with the life-song of humanity.

## THE STONE

"And will you cut a stone for him,
To set above his head?
And will you cut a stone for him—
A stone for him?" she said.

Three days before, a splintered rock
Had struck her lover dead—
Had struck him in the quarry dead,
Where, careless of the warning call,
He loitered, while the shot was fired—
A lively stripling, brave and tall,
And sure of all his heart desired . . .
A flash, a shock,
A rumbling fall . . .
And, broken 'neath the broken rock,
A lifeless heap, with face of clay;
And still as any stone he lay,
With eyes that saw the end of all.

I went to break the news to her;
And I could hear my own heart beat
With dread of what my lips might say

But, some poor fool had sped before;
And flinging wide her father's door,
Had blurted out the news to her,
Had struck her lover dead for her,
Had struck the girl's heart dead in her,
Had struck life lifeless, at a word,
And dropped it at her feet:
Then hurried on his witless way,
Scarce knowing she had heard.

And when I came, she stood alone,
A woman turned to stone:
And, though no word at all she said,
I knew that all was known.
Because her heart was dead,
She did not sigh nor moan,
His mother wept:
She could not weep.
Her lover slept:
She could not sleep.
Three days, three nights,
She did not stir:
Three days, three nights,
Were one to her,
Who never closed her eyes
From sunset to sunrise,
From dawn to evenfall:
Her tearless, staring eyes,
That seeing naught, saw all.

The fourth night when I came from work,
I found her at my door.
"And will you cut a stone for him?"
She said: and spoke no more:
But followed me, as I went in,
And sank upon a chair;
And fixed her gray eyes on my face,
With still, unseeing stare.
And, as she waited patiently,
I could not bear to feel
Those still, gray eyes that followed me,

Those eyes that plucked the heart from me,
Those eyes that sucked the breath from me
And curdled the warm blood in me,
Those eyes that cut me to the bone,
And pierced my marrow like cold steel.

And so I rose, and sought a stone;
And cut it, smooth and square:
And, as I worked, she sat and watched,
Beside me, in her chair.
Night after night, by candlelight,
I cut her lover's name:
Night after night, so still and white,
And like a ghost she came;
And sat beside me in her chair;
And watched with eyes aflame.

She eyed each stroke;
And hardly stirred:
She never spoke
A single word:
And not a sound or murmur broke
The quiet, save the mallet-stroke.

With still eyes ever on my hands,
With eyes that seemed to burn my hands,
My wincing, overwearied hands,
She watched, with bloodless lips apart,
And silent, indrawn breath:
And every stroke my chisel cut,
Death cut still deeper in her heart:
The two of us were chiseling,
Together, I and death.

And when at length the job was done,
And I had laid the mallet by,
As if, at last, her peace were won,
She breathed his name; and, with a sigh,
Passed slowly through the open door:
And never crossed my threshold more.

Next night I labored late, alone,
To cut her name upon the stone.

### SIGHT

By the lamplit stall I loitered, feasting my eyes
On colors ripe and rich for the heart's desire—
Tomatoes, redder than Krakatoa's fire,
Oranges like old sunsets over Tyre,
And apples golden-green as the glades of Paradise.

And as I lingered, lost in divine delight,
My heart thanked God for the goodly gift of sight
And all youth's lively senses keen and quick . . .
When suddenly, behind me in the night,
I heard the tapping of a blind man's stick.

## T. M. KETTLE

T(homas) M. Kettle was born in Artane County, Dublin, in 1880 and was educated at University College, where he won the Gold Medal for Oratory. His extraordinary faculty for grasping an intricate problem and crystallizing it in an epigram, or scoring his adversaries with one bright flash, was apparent even then. He was admitted to the bar in 1905 but soon abandoned the law to devote himself to journalism, which, because of his remarkable style, never remained journalism in his hands. In 1906 he entered politics; in 1910 he was reëlected for East Tyrone. Even his bitterest opponents conceded that Tom Kettle (as he was called by friend and enemy) was the most honorable of fighters; they acknowledged his honesty, courage and devotion to the cause of a United Ireland—and respected his penetrating wit. He once spoke of a Mr. Healy as "a brilliant calamity" and satirized a long-winded speaker by saying, "Mr. Long knows a sentence should have a beginning, but he quite forgets it should also have an end."

"An Irish torch-bearer" (so E. B. Osborn calls him), Kettle fell in action at Ginchy, leading his Fusiliers in September, 1916. The uplifted poem to his daughter was written shortly before his death.

### TO MY DAUGHTER BETTY, THE GIFT OF GOD

In wiser days, my darling rosebud, blown
To beauty proud as was your mother's prime,
In that desired, delayed, incredible time,
You'll ask why I abandoned you, my own,

And the dear heart that was your baby throne,
To dice with death. And, oh! they'll give you rhyme
And reason: some will call the thing sublime,
And some decry it in a knowing tone.

So here, while the mad guns curse overhead,
And tired men sigh with mud for couch and floor,
Know that we fools, now with the foolish dead,
Died not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor,—
But for a dream, born in a herdsman's shed,
And for the secret Scripture of the poor.

## ALFRED NOYES

Alfred Noyes was born at Staffordshire, September 16, 1880. He is one of the few contemporary poets who have been fortunate enough to write a kind of poetry that is not only readable but extraordinarily saleable.

His first book, *The Loom of Years* (1902), was published when he was only 22 years old, and *Poems* (1904) intensified the promise of this first publication. Swinburne, grown old and living in retirement, was so struck with Noyes's talent that he had the young poet out to read to him. Unfortunately, Noyes has not developed his gifts as deeply as his admirers expected. His poetry, extremely straightforward and rhythmical, has often degenerated into cheap sentimentalities and cheaper tirades; it has attempted to express programs and profundities far beyond Noyes's power.

What is most appealing about his best verse is its ease and heartiness; this singer's gift lies in the almost personal bond established between the poet and his public. It may be said that people have such a good time reading his vivacious lines because Noyes had such a good time writing them. Rhyme in a thumping rhythm seems to be not merely his trade but his morning exercise. Noyes's own relish quickens glees and catches like *Forty Singing Seamen* (1907), the lusty choruses in *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* (1913), the seemingly inspired nonsense of the earlier *Forest of Wild Thyme* (1905).

The least popular work of Noyes is, as a unified product, his most remarkable performance. It is an epic in twelve books of blank verse, *Drake* (1908), a glowing pageant of the sea and England's drama upon it. It is a spirited echo of the maritime Elizabethans; a vivid and orchestral work interspersed with lyric passages and brisk songs. The companion volume, an attempted

reconstruction of the literary phase of the same period, is less successful; but these *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* (which introduce Shakespeare, Marlowe, Drayton, Raleigh, Ben Jonson, and other immortals) are alive and colorful, if somewhat too insistently rollicking and smoothly lilting.

Noyes's eight volumes were assembled in 1913 and published in two books of *Collected Poems*. The third volume of his rapidly accumulating *Collected Poems* appeared in 1920, the fourth in 1927. In 1922 Noyes began *The Torch-Bearers*, "An Epic Trilogy," which was a sort of outline of man's accomplishment rendered in verse and which was cruelly parodied by E. V. Knox in "The Steam-Givers."

Besides his verse, Noyes has written several volumes of prose; *Some Aspects of Modern Poetry* (1924) is a critical study, *The Sun Cure* (1929) is a novel, both volumes being marred by Noyes's petulant and often irrelevant gibes at modern poetry.

Although most of his smooth-running rhymes seemed doomed to rush to an early death—are, in fact, already extinct—Noyes will remain a poet pleasant to read because of his "Sherwood," the lilt of "The Barrel Organ," the galloping "The Highwayman" and a handful of other ballads.

## SHERWOOD

Sherwood in the twilight, is Robin Hood awake?
Gray and ghostly shadows are gliding through the brake;
Shadows of the dappled deer, dreaming of the morn,
Dreaming of a shadowy man that winds a shadowy horn.

Robin Hood is here again: all his merry thieves
Hear a ghostly bugle-note shivering through the leaves,
Calling as he used to call, faint and far away,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Merry, merry England has kissed the lips of June:
All the wings of fairyland were here beneath the moon;
Like a flight of rose-leaves fluttering in a mist
Of opal and ruby and pearl and amethyst.

Merry, merry England is waking as of old,
With eyes of blither hazel and hair of brighter gold:
For Robin Hood is here again beneath the bursting spray
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Love is in the greenwood building him a house
Of wild rose and hawthorn and honeysuckle boughs;
Love is in the greenwood: dawn is in the skies;
And Marian is waiting with a glory in her eyes.

Hark! The dazzled laverock climbs the golden steep:
Marian is waiting: is Robin Hood asleep?
Round the fairy grass-rings frolic elf and fay,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Oberon, Oberon, rake away the gold,
Rake away the red leaves, roll away the mold,
Rake away the gold leaves, roll away the red,
And wake Will Scarlett from his leafy forest bed.

Friar Tuck and Little John are riding down together
With quarter-staff and drinking-can and gray goose-feather;
The dead are coming back again; the years are rolled away
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Softly over Sherwood the south wind blows;
All the heart of England hid in every rose
Hears across the greenwood the sunny whisper leap,
Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep?

Hark, the voice of England wakes him as of old
And, shattering the silence with a cry of brighter gold,
Bugles in the greenwood echo from the steep,
*Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep?*

Where the deer are gliding down the shadowy glen
All across the glades of fern he calls his merry men;
Doublets of the Lincoln green glancing through the May,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day;

Calls them and they answer: from aisles of oak and ash
Rings the *Follow! Follow!* and the boughs begin to crash;
The ferns begin to flutter and the flowers begin to fly;
And through the crimson dawning the robber band goes by.

*Robin! Robin! Robin!* All his merry thieves
Answer as the bugle-note shivers through the leaves:
Calling as he used to call, faint and far away,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

## THE BARREL-ORGAN

There's a barrel-organ caroling across a golden street
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet
And fulfilled it with the sunset glow;
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain
That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light;
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.
And now it's marching onward through the realms of old romance,
And trolling out a fond familiar tune,
And now it's roaring cannon down to fight the King of France,
And now it's prattling softly to the moon.
And all around the organ there's a sea without a shore
Of human joys and wonders and regrets;
To remember and to recompense the music evermore
For what the cold machinery forgets . . .

Yes; as the music changes,
Like a prismatic glass,
It takes the light and ranges
Through all the moods that pass:
Dissects the common carnival
Of passions and regrets,
And gives the world a glimpse of all
The colors it forgets.

And there *La Traviata* sighs
Another sadder song;
And there *Il Trovatore* cries
A tale of deeper wrong;
And bolder knights to battle go
With sword and shield and lance,
Than ever here on earth below
Have whirled into—a dance!—

Go down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)
And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland;
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)

The cherry-trees are seas of bloom and soft perfume and sweet perfume,
The cherry-trees are seas of bloom (and oh, so near to London!)
And there they say, when dawn is high and all the world's a blaze of sky
The cuckoo, though he's very shy, will sing a song for London.

The nightingale is rather rare and yet they say you'll hear him there
At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to London!)
The linnet and the throstle, too, and after dark the long halloo
And golden-eyed *tu-whit, tu-whoo* of owls that ogle London.

For Noah hardly knew a bird of any kind that isn't heard
At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to London!)
And when the rose begins to pout and all the chestnut spires are out
You'll hear the rest without a doubt, all chorusing for London:—

*Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;*
*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)*
*And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland;*
*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)*

And then the troubadour begins to thrill the golden street,
In the city as the sun sinks low;
And in all the gaudy busses there are scores of weary feet
Marking time, sweet time, with a dull mechanic beat,
And a thousand hearts are plunging to a love they'll never meet,
Through the meadows of the sunset, through the poppies and the wheat,
In the land where the dead dreams go.

Verdi, Verdi, when you wrote *Il Trovatore* did you dream
Of the City when the sun sinks low,
Of the organ and the monkey and the many-colored stream
On the Piccadilly pavement, of the myriad eyes that seem
To be litten for a moment with a wild Italian gleam
As *A che la morte* parodies the world's eternal theme
And pulses with the sunset-glow?

There's a thief, perhaps, that listens with a face of frozen stone
In the City as the sun sinks low;
There's a portly man of business with a balance of his own,
There's a clerk and there's a butcher of a soft reposeful tone,
And they're all of them returning to the heavens they have known:
They are crammed and jammed in busses and—they're each of them alone
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a laborer that listens to the voices of the dead
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And his hand begins to tremble and his face is rather red
As he sees a loafer watching him and—there he turns his head
And stares into the sunset where his April love is fled,
For he hears her softly singing and his lonely soul is led
Through the land where the dead dreams go . . .

There's a barrel-organ caroling across a golden street
In the City as the sun sinks low;
Though the music's only Verdi there's a world to make it sweet
Just as yonder yellow sunset where the earth and heaven meet
Mellows all the sooty City! Hark, a hundred thousand feet
Are marching on to glory through the poppies and the wheat
In the land where the dead dreams go.

So it's Jeremiah, Jeremiah,
What have you to say
When you meet the garland girls
Tripping on their way?
All around my gala hat

I wear a wreath of roses
(A long and lonely year it is
I've waited for the May!)
If any one should ask you,
The reason why I wear it is—
My own love, my true love, is coming home today.

And it's buy a bunch of violets for the lady
(*It's lilac-time in London; it's lilac-time in London!*)
Buy a bunch of violets for the lady;
While the sky burns blue above:

On the other side the street you'll find it shady
(*It's lilac-time in London; it's lilac-time in London!*)
But buy a bunch of violets for the lady,
And tell her she's your own true love.

There's a barrel-organ caroling across a golden street
In the City as the sun sinks glittering and slow;
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet
And enriched it with the harmonies that make a song complete
In the deeper heavens of music where the night and morning meet,
As it dies into the sunset glow;
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain
That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light,
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And there, as the music changes,
The song runs round again;
Once more it turns and ranges
Through all its joy and pain:
Dissects the common carnival
Of passions and regrets;
And the wheeling world remembers all
The wheeling song forgets.

Once more *La Traviata* sighs
Another sadder song:
Once more *Il Trovatore* cries
A tale of deeper wrong;

Once more the knights to battle go
With sword and shield and lance
Till once, once more, the shattered foe
Has whirled into—a dance!

*Come down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;*
*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)*
*And you shall wander hand in hand with Love in summer's wonderland,*
*Come down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)*

## EPILOGUE

*(From "The Flower of Old Japan")*

Carol, every violet has
Heaven for a looking-glass!

Every little valley lies
Under many-clouded skies;
Every little cottage stands
Girt about with boundless lands.
Every little glimmering pond
Claims the mighty shores beyond—
Shores no seaman ever hailed,
Seas no ship has ever sailed.

All the shores when day is done
Fade into the setting sun,
So the story tries to teach
More than can be told in speech.

Beauty is a fading flower,
Truth is but a wizard's tower,
Where a solemn death-bell tolls,
And a forest round it rolls.
We have come by curious ways
To the light that holds the days;
We have sought in haunts of fear
For that all-enfolding sphere:
And lo! it was not far, but near.
We have found, O foolish-fond,
The shore that has no shore beyond.

Deep in every heart it lies
With its untranscended skies;
For what heaven should bend above
Hearts that own the heaven of love?

Carol, Carol, we have come
Back to heaven, back to home.

## PADRAIC COLUM

Padraic Colum was born at Longford, Ireland (in the same county as Oliver Goldsmith), December 8, 1881, and was educated at the local schools. At twenty he was a member of a group that created the Irish National Theatre, afterwards called The Abbey Theatre.

Colum began as a dramatist with *Broken Soil* (1904), *The Land* (1905), *Thomas Muskerry* (1910), and this early dramatic influence has colored much of his work, his best poetry being in the form of dramatic lyrics. *Wild Earth,* his most quoted collection of verse, first appeared in 1909, and an amplified edition of it was published in America in 1916. Colum himself had come to America (where he has lived ever since) shortly before that date; his *Dramatic Poems* appeared in 1922.

*Creatures* (1927), utterly different in theme from its predecessors, is held together by the same gift of condensation. Though Colum's animals are less obviously divine than his gods, his treatment of them is no less devotional.

As a recorder, Colum has been equally successful as an autobiographer (*My Irish Year,* 1912), a folk-lorist (*Tales and Legends of Hawaii,* 1924, *The Bright Islands,* 1925) and a deservedly popular adapter of tales for children.

### THE PLOWER[1]

Sunset and silence! A man: around him earth savage, earth broken;
Beside him two horses—a plow!

Earth savage, earth broken, the brutes, the dawn man there in the sunset,
And the Plow that is twin to the Sword, that is founder of cities!

[1] For its similarity in subject and difference in treatment, it is interesting to compare this poem with Edwin Markham's "The Man with the Hoe."

"Brute-tamer, plow-maker, earth-breaker! Can'st hear?
"There are ages between us.
"Is it praying you are as you stand there alone in the sunset?
"Surely our sky-born gods can be naught to you, earth child and earth-master?
"Surely your thoughts are of Pan, or of Wotan, or Dana?
"Yet, why give thought to the gods? Has Pan led your brutes where they stumble?
"Has Dana numbed pain of the child-bed, or Wotan put hands to your plow?
"What matter your foolish reply! O man, standing lone and bowed earthward,
"Your task is a day near its close. Give thanks to the night-giving God."

. . . . . .

Slowly the darkness falls, the broken lands blend with the savage;
The brute-tamer stands by the brutes, a head's breadth only above them.
A head's breadth? Aye, but therein is hell's depth, and the height up to heaven,
And the thrones of the gods and their halls, their chariots, purples, and splendors.

## AN OLD WOMAN OF THE ROADS

O, to have a little house!
To own the hearth and stool and all!
The heaped up sods upon the fire,
The pile of turf against the wall!

To have a clock with weights and chains
And pendulum swinging up and down!
A dresser filled with shining delph,
Speckled and white and blue and brown!

I could be busy all the day
Clearing and sweeping hearth and floor,
And fixing on their shelf again
My white and blue and speckled store!

I could be quiet there at night
Beside the fire and by myself,
Sure of a bed and loth to leave
The ticking clock and the shining delph!

Och! but I'm weary of mist and dark,
And roads where there's never a house nor bush,
And tired I am of bog and road,
And the crying wind and the lonesome hush!

And I am praying to God on high,
And I am praying Him night and day,
For a little house—a house of my own—
Out of the wind's and the rain's way.

## INTERIOR

The little moths are creeping
Across the cottage pane;
On the floor the chickens gather,
And they make talk and complain.

And she sits by the fire
Who has reared so many men;
Her voice is low like the chickens'
With the things she says again.

"The sons that come back do be restless,
They search for the thing to say;
Then they take thought like the swallows,
And the morrow brings them away.

"In the old, old days, upon Innish,
The fields were lucky and bright,
And if you lay down you'd be covered
By the grass of one soft night."

She speaks and the chickens gather,
And they make talk and complain,
While the little moths are creeping
Across the cottage pane.

## A DROVER

To Meath of the pastures,
From wet hills by the sea,
Through Leitrim and Longford,
Go my cattle and me.

I hear in the darkness
Their slipping and breathing—
I name them the by-ways
They're to pass without heeding;

Then the wet, winding roads,
Brown bogs with black water;
And my thoughts on white ships
And the King o' Spain's daughter.

Oh! farmer, strong farmer!
You can spend at the fair;
But your face you must turn
To your crops and your care.

And soldiers, red soldiers!
You've seen many lands;
But you walk two by two,
And by captain's commands.

Oh! the smell of the beasts,
The wet wind in the morn;
And the proud and hard earth
Never broken for corn;

And the crowds at the fair,
The herds loosened and blind,
Loud words and dark faces
And the wild blood behind.

(Oh! strong men, with your best
I would strive breast to breast,
I could quiet your herds
With my words, with my words.)

I will bring you my kine,
Where there's grass to the knee;
But you'll think of scant croppings
Harsh with salt of the sea.

### WILD ASS

The wild ass lounges, legs struck out
In vagrom unconcern:
The tombs of Achaemenian kings
Are for those hooves to spurn.

And all of rugged Tartary
Lies with him on the ground.
The Tartary that knows no awe
That has nor ban nor bound.

The wild horse from the herd is plucked
To bear a saddle's weight;
The boar is one keeps covert, and
The wolf runs with a mate.

But he's the solitary of space,
Curbless and unbeguiled;
The only being that bears a heart
Not recreant to the wild.

## JOSEPH CAMPBELL

(*Seosamh MacCathmhaoil*)

Joseph Campbell was born in Belfast in 1881, and is not only a poet but an artist; he made all the illustrations for *The Rushlight* (1906), a volume of his own poems. Writing under the Gaelic form of his name, he has published half a dozen books of verse, the most striking of which is *The Mountainy Singer*, first published in Dublin in 1909.

*Judgment* (1912), a play in two acts, was followed by a collection of racy poems, *Earth of Cualann* (1917).

## I AM THE MOUNTAINY SINGER

I am the mountainy singer—
The voice of the peasant's dream,
The cry of the wind on the wooded hill,
The leap of the fish in the stream.

Quiet and love I sing—
The carn on the mountain crest,
The *cailin* in her lover's arms,
The child at its mother's breast.

Beauty and peace I sing—
The fire on the open hearth,
The *cailleach* spinning at her wheel,
The plow in the broken earth.

Travail and pain I sing—
The bride on the childing bed,
The dark man laboring at his rhymes,
The ewe in the lambing shed.

Sorrow and death I sing—
The canker come on the corn,
The fisher lost in the mountain loch,
The cry at the mouth of morn.

No other life I sing,
For I am sprung of the stock
That broke the hilly land for bread,
And built the nest in the rock!

## THE OLD WOMAN

As a white candle
  In a holy place,
So is the beauty
  Of an aged face.

As the spent radiance
  Of the winter sun,
So is a woman
  With her travail done,

Her brood gone from her,
And her thoughts as still
As the waters
Under a ruined mill.

## JOHN FREEMAN

John Freeman, born in 1881 in London, published several volumes of pleasantly descriptive verse. His first volume appeared in 1909; since then, his two most distinctive books are *Stone Trees* (1916) and *Memories of Childhood* (1919).

A collected edition of the poems from the previous volumes was published in 1920 under the title *Poems New and Old.* In the same year, Freeman was awarded the Hawthornden prize. He had written a great quantity of love lyrics, but Freeman's landscapes are more distinctive than his subjective pieces. Even his pastorals are too patterned, too perfunctory; instead of being rural they are merely suburban.

The best of Freeman's preceding eleven volumes of poems were gathered in *Collected Poems* (1928). He was also the author of several novels and studies, the most interesting of which is *Herman Melville* (1926).

*English Portraits and Essays* appeared in 1924, a volume that promised a mature critical faculty, cut off by Freeman's death in 1929.

### STONE TREES

Last night a sword-light in the sky
Flashed a swift terror on the dark.
In that sharp light the fields did lie
Naked and stone-like; each tree stood
Like a tranced woman, bound and stark.
Far off the wood
With darkness ridged the riven dark.

And cows astonished stared with fear,
And sheep crept to the knees of cows,
And conies to their burrows slid,
And rooks were still in rigid boughs,
And all things else were still or hid.
From all the wood
Came but the owl's hoot, ghostly, clear.

In that cold trance the earth was held
It seemed an age, or time was nought.
Sure never from that stone-like field
Sprang golden corn, nor from those chill
Gray granite trees was music wrought.
In all the wood
Even the tall poplar hung stone still.

It seemed an age, or time was none . . .
Slowly the earth heaved out of sleep
And shivered, and the trees of stone
Bent and sighed in the gusty wind,
And rain swept as birds flocking sweep.
Far off the wood
Rolled the slow thunders on the wind.

From all the wood came no brave bird,
No song broke through the close-fall'n night,
Nor any sound from cowering herd:
Only a dog's long lonely howl
When from the window poured pale light.
And from the wood
The hoot came ghostly of the owl.

## THE FUGITIVE

In the hush of early even
The clouds came flocking over,
Till the last wind fell from heaven
And no bird cried.

Darkly the clouds were flocking,
Shadows moved and deepened,
Then paused; the poplar's rocking
Ceased; the light hung still

Like a painted thing, and deadly.
Then from the cloud's side flickered
Sharp lightning, thrusting madly
At the cowering fields.

Thrice the fierce cloud lighten'd
Down the hill slow thunder trembled;
Day in her cave grew frightened,
Crept away, and died.

### THE WAKERS

The joyous morning ran and kissed the grass
And drew his fingers through her sleeping hair,
And cried, "Before thy flowers are well awake
Rise, and the lingering darkness from thee shake.

"Before the daisy and the sorrel buy
Their brightness back from that close-folding night,
Come, and the shadows from thy bosom shake,
Awake from thy thick sleep, awake, awake!"

Then the grass of that mounded meadow stirred
Above the Roman bones that may not stir
Though joyous morning whispered, shouted, sang:
The grass stirred as that happy music rang.

O, what a wondrous rustling everywhere!
The steady shadows shook and thinned and died,
The shining grass flashed brightness back for brightness,
And sleep was gone, and there was heavenly lightness.

As if she had found wings, light as the wind,
The grass flew, bent with the wind, from east to west,
Chased by one wild gray cloud, and flashing all
Her dews for happiness to hear morning call. . . .

But even as I stepped out the brightness dimmed,
I saw the fading edge of all delight.
The sober morning waked the drowsy herds,
And there was the old scolding of the birds.

## LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

Lascelles Abercrombie was born in 1881, at Ashton-upon-Mersey, near Manchester. He was educated at Malcolm College and Manchester University. Since then, he has engaged in a variety of professions; teaching literature at the University in Liverpool, and in London.

Like Masefield, Abercrombie gained his reputation rapidly; totally unknown until 1909, upon the publication of *Interludes and Poems*, he was recognized as one of the undoubted metaphysical poets of his period. *Emblems of Love* (1912), the ripest collection of his blank verse dialogues, justified the enthusiasm of his admirers.

Many of Abercrombie's poems, the best of which are too long to quote, are founded on scriptural themes, but his blank verse is biblical neither in mood nor in manner. It is the undercurrent rather than the surface of his verse which moves with a strong religious conviction. Abercrombie's images are daring and brilliant; his lines, sometimes too closely packed, glow with an intensity that is spiritual and yet recognizably human.

As a dramatist, Abercrombie has achieved a series of literary but scarcely popular successes with *Deborah* (1914), *Four Short Plays* (1921) and *Phoenix* (1923), brilliantly written though not eminently actable pieces. His knotted, almost tortured, style presents many difficulties to the performers as well as to audiences; but, once the speech is mastered, a swift intellectuality and a vividly dramatic mind are disclosed.

It is only the superficially dense style which keeps Abercrombie an unpopular, almost an unread, poet. Actually his diction, though thickened, is extraordinarily flexible; his characters, if overburdened with analysis, are vividly imagined; and, as Edward Thomas wrote, "the march or leap or stagger or hesitation of the syllables correspond to varying emotions with thrilling delicacy."

It seems a pity that the poet who conceived the ecstatic action of *The Sale of St. Thomas* (1911), the racing vigor of "Witchcraft: New Style," and the brilliant couplets of "Epilogue," should turn away from poetry. Since 1916, Abercrombie has concerned himself (with the exception of two plays) entirely with prose. Since 1914 he has written no less than six volumes about prosody and the technique of verse, *The Theory of Poetry* (1924) being one of the most illuminating books on the subject.

## SONG

(*From "Judith"*)

Balkis was in her marble town,
And shadow over the world came down.
Whiteness of walls, towers and piers,
That all day dazzled eyes to tears,
Turned from being white-golden flame,
And like the deep-sea blue became.

Balkis into her garden went;
Her spirit was in discontent
Like a torch in restless air.
Joylessly she wandered there,
And saw her city's azure white
Lying under the great night,
Beautiful as the memory
Of a worshiping world would be
In the mind of a god, in the hour
When he must kill his outward power;
And, coming to a pool where trees
Grew in double greeneries,
Saw herself, as she went by
The water, walking beautifully,
And saw the stars shine in the glance
Of her eyes, and her own fair countenance
Passing, pale and wonderful,
Across the night that filled the pool.
And cruel was the grief that played
With the queen's spirit; and she said:
"What do I here, reigning alone?
For to be unloved is to be alone.
There is no man in all my land
Dare my longing understand;
The whole folk like a peasant bows
Lest its look should meet my brows
And be harmed by this beauty of mine.
I burn their brains as I were sign
Of God's beautiful anger sent
To master them with punishment
Of beauty that must pour distress
On hearts grown dark with ugliness.
But it is I am the punisht one.
Is there no man, is there none,
In whom my beauty will but move
The lust of a delighted love;
In whom some spirit of God so thrives
That we may wed our lonely lives.
Is there no man, is there none?"—
She said, "I will go to Solomon."

## EPILOGUE

What shall we do for Love these days?
How shall we make an altar-blaze
To smite the horny eyes of men
With the renown of our Heaven,
And to the unbelievers prove
Our service to our dear god, Love?
What torches shall we lift above
The crowd that pushes through the mire,
To amaze the dark heads with strange fire?
I should think I were much to blame,
If never I held some fragrant flame
Above the noises of the world,
And openly 'mid men's hurrying stares,
Worshipt before the sacred fears
That are like flashing curtains furl'd
Across the presence of our lord Love.
Nay, would that I could fill the gaze
Of the whole earth with some great praise
Made in a marvel for men's eyes,
Some tower of glittering masonries,
Therein such a spirit flourishing
Men should see what my heart can sing:
All that Love hath done to me
Built into stone, a visible glee;
Marble carried to gleaming height
As moved aloft by inward delight;
Not as with toil of chisels hewn,
But seeming poised in a mighty tune.

For of all those who have been known
To lodge with our kind host, the sun,
I envy one for just one thing:
In Cordova of the Moors
There dwelt a passion-minded King,
Who set great bands of marble-hewers
To fashion his heart's thanksgiving
In a tall palace, shapen so
All the wondering world might know

The joy he had of his Moorish lass.
His love, that brighter and larger was
Than the starry places, into firm stone
He sent, as if the stone were glass
Fired and into beauty blown.
Solemn and invented gravely
In its bulk the fabric stood,
Even as Love, that trusteth bravely
In its own exceeding good
To be better than the waste
Of time's devices; grandly spaced,
Seriously the fabric stood.
But over it all a pleasure went
Of carven delicate ornament,
Wreathing up like ravishment,
Mentioning in sculptures twined
The blitheness Love hath in his mind;
And like delighted senses were
The windows, and the columns there
Made the following sight to ache
As the heart that did them make.
Well I can see that shining song
Flowering there, the upward throng
Of porches, pillars and windowed walls,
Spires like piercing panpipe calls,
Up to the roof's snow-cloudy flight;
All glancing in the Spanish light
White as water of arctic tides,
Save an amber dazzle on sunny sides.
You had said, the radiant sheen
Of that palace might have been
A young god's fantasy, ere he came
His serious worlds and suns to frame;
Such an immortal passion
Quiver'd among the slim hewn stone.
And in the nights it seemed a jar
Cut in the substance of a star,
Wherein a wine, that will be poured
Some time for feasting Heaven, was stored.
But within this fretted shell,
The wonder of Love made visible,

The King a private gentle mood
There placed, of pleasant quietude.
For right amidst there was a court,
Where always muskèd silences
Listened to water and to trees;
And herbage of all fragrant sort,—
Lavender, lad's love, rosemary,
Basil, tansy, centaury,—
Was the grass of that orchard, hid
Love's amazements all amid.
Jarring the air with rumor cool,
Small fountains played into a pool
With sound as soft as the barley's hiss
When its beard just sprouting is;
Whence a young stream, that trod on moss,
Prettily rimpled the court across.
And in the pool's clear idleness,
Moving like dreams through happiness,
Shoals of small bright fishes were;
In and out weed-thickets bent
Perch and carp, and sauntering went
With mounching jaws and eyes a-stare;
Or on a lotus leaf would crawl,
A brinded loach to bask and sprawl,
Tasting the warm sun ere it dipt
Into the water; but quick as fear
Back his shining brown head slipt
To crouch on the gravel of his lair,
Where the cooled sunbeams broke in wrack,
Spilt shatter'd gold about his back.
So within that green-veiled air,
Within that white-walled quiet, where
Innocent water thought aloud,—
Childish prattle that must make
The wise sunlight with laughter shake
On the leafage overbowed,—
Often the King and his love-lass
Let the delicious hours pass.
All the outer world could see
Graved and sawn amazingly

Their love's delighted riotise,
Fixt in marble for all men's eyes;
But only these twain could abide
In the cool peace that withinside
Thrilling desire and passion dwelt;
They only knew the still meaning spelt
By Love's flaming script, which is
God's word written in ecstasies.
And where is now that palace gone,
All the magical skill'd stone,
All the dreaming towers wrought
By Love as if no more than thought
The unresisting marble was?
How could such a wonder pass?
Ah, it was but built in vain
Against the stupid horns of Rome,
That pusht down into the common loam
The loveliness that shone in Spain.
But we have raised it up again!
A loftier palace, fairer far,
Is ours, and one that fears no war.
Safe in marvelous walls we are;
Wondering sense like builded fires,
High amazement of desires,
Delight and certainty of love,
Closing around, roofing above
Our unapproacht and perfect hour
Within the splendors of love's power.

## WOMAN'S BEAUTY

(*From "Vashti"*)

What thing shall be held up to woman's beauty?
Where are the bounds of it? Yea, what is all
The world, but an awning scaffolded amid
The waste perilous Eternity, to lodge
This Heaven-wander'd princess, woman's beauty?
The East and West kneel down to thee, the North
And South; and all for thee their shoulders bear
The load of fourfold space. As yellow morn
Runs on the slippery waves of the spread sea,

Thy feet are on the griefs and joys of men
That shine to be thy causey. Out of tears
Indeed, and blitheness, murder and lust and love,
Whatever has been passionate in clay,
Thy flesh was tempered. Behold in thy body
The yearnings of all men measured and told,
Insatiate endless agonies of desire
Given thy flesh, the meaning of thy shape!
What beauty is there, but thou makest it?
How is earth good to look on, woods and fields,
The season's garden, and the courageous hills,
All this green raft of earth moored in the seas?
The manner of the sun to ride the air,
The stars God has imagined for the night?
What's this behind them that we cannot near,
Secret still on the point of being blabbed,
The ghost in the world that flies from being named?
Where do they get their beauty from, all these?
They do but glaze a lantern lit for man,
And woman's beauty is the flame therein.

## WITCHCRAFT: NEW STYLE

The sun drew off at last his piercing fires.
Over the stale warm air, dull as a pond
And moveless in the gray quieted street,
Blue magic of a summer evening glowed.
The sky, that had been dazzling stone all day,
Hollowed in smooth hard brightness, now dissolved
To infinite soft depth, and smoldered down
Low as the roofs, dark burning blue, and soared
Clear to that winking drop of liquid silver,
The first exquisite star. Now the half-light
Tidied away the dusty litter parching
Among the cobbles, veiled in the color of distance
Shabby slates and brickwork moldering, turned
The hunchback houses into patient things
Resting; and golden windows now began.

A little brisk gray slattern of a woman,
Pattering along in her loose-heeled clogs,
Pusht the brass-barred door of a public-house;

The spring went hard against her; hand and knee
Shoved their weak best. As the door poised ajar,
Hullabaloo of talking men burst out,
A pouring babble of inflamed palaver,
And overriding it and shouted down
High words, jeering or downright, broken like
Crests that leap and stumble in rushing water.
Just as the door went wide and she stept in,
"She cannot do it!" one was bawling out:
A glaring hulk of flesh with a bull's voice.
He fingered with his neckerchief, and stretcht
His throat to ease the anger of dispute,
Then spat to put a full stop to the matter.
The little woman waited, with one hand
Propping the door, and smiled at the loud man.
They saw her then; and the sight was enough
To gag the speech of every drinker there:
The din fell down like something chopt off short.
Blank they all wheeled towards her, with their mouths
Still gaping as though full of voiceless words.
She let the door slam to; and all at ease,
Amused, her smile wrinkling about her eyes,
Went forward; they made room for her quick enough.
Her chin just topt the counter; she gave in
Her bottle to the potboy, tuckt it back,
Full of bright tawny ale, under her arm,
Rapt down the coppers on the planisht zinc,
And turned: and no word spoken all the while.
The first voice, in that silent crowd, was hers,
Her light snickering laugh, as she stood there
Pausing, scanning the sawdust at her feet.
Then she switcht round and faced the positive man
Whose strong "She cannot do it!" all still felt
Huskily shouting in their guilty ears.
"She can't, eh? She can't do it?"—Then she'd heard!
The man, inside his ruddy insolent flesh,
Had hoped she did not hear. His barrel chest
Gave a slight cringe, as though the glint of her eyes
Prickt him. But he stood up to her awkwardly bold,
One elbow on the counter, gripping his mug
Like a man holding on to a post for safety.

*The Man* You can't do what's not nature: nobody can.
*The Woman* And louts like you have nature in your pocket?
*The Man* I don't say that—
*The Woman* If you kept saying naught,
No one would guess the fool you are.
*Second Man* Almost
My very words!
*The Woman* O you're the knowing man!
The spark among the cinders!
*First Man* You can't fetch
A free man back, unless he wants to come.
*The Woman* Nay, I'll be bound he doesn't want to come!
*Third Man* And he won't come: he told me flat he wouldn't.
*The Woman* Are you there too?
*Third Man* And if he does come back
It will be devilry brought him.
*The Woman* I shall bring him;—
Tonight.
*First Man* How will he come?
*The Woman* Running: unless
He's broke his leg, and then he'll have to come
Crawling. But he will come.
*First Man* How do you know
What he may choose to do, three countries off?
*The Woman* He choose?
*Third Man* You haven't got him on a lead.
*The Woman* Haven't I though!
*Second Man* That's right: it's what I said.
*The Woman* Aye, there are brains in your family.
*First Man* You have
Some sort of pull on him, to draw him home?
*The Woman* You may say that: I have hold of his mind.
And I can slack it off or fetch it taut,
And make him dance a score of miles away
An answer to the least twangling thrum
I play on it. He thought he lurkt at last
Safely; and all the while, what has he been?
An eel on the end of a night-line; and it's time
I hauled him in. You'll see, tonight I'll land him.
*Third Man* Bragging's a light job.

*The Woman* You daren't let me take
Your eyes in mine!—Haul, did I say? no need:
I give his mind a twitch, and up he comes
Tumbling home to me. Whatever work he's at,
He drops the thing he holds like redhot iron
And runs—runs till he falls down like a beast
Pole-axt, and grunts for breath; then up and on,
No matter does he know the road or not:
The strain I put on his mind will keep him going
Right as a homing-pigeon.

*First Man* Devilry
I call it.

*The Woman* And you're welcome.

*Second Man* But the law
Should have a say here.

*The Woman* What, isn't he mine,
My own? There's naught but what I please about it.

*Third Man* Why did you let him go?

*The Woman* To fetch him back!
For I enjoy this, mind. There's many a one
Would think to see me, There goes misery!
There's a queer starveling for you!—and I do
A thing that makes me like a saint in glory,
The life of me the sound of a great tune
Your flesh could never hear: I can send power
Delighting out of me! O, the mere thought
Has made my blood go smarting in my veins,
Such a flame glowing along it!—And all the same
I'll pay him out for sidling off from me.
But I'll have supper first.

When she was gone,
Their talk could scarcely raise itself again
Above a grumble. But at last a cry
Sharp-pitcht came startling in from the street: at once
Their moody talk exploded into flare
Of swearing hubbub, like gunpowder dropt

On embers; mugs were clapt down, out they bolted
Rowdily jostling, eager for the event.
All down the street the folk thronged out of doors,
But left a narrow track clear in the middle;
And there a man came running, a tall man
Running desperately and slowly, pounding
Like a machine, so evenly, so blindly;
And regularly his trotting body wagged.
Only one foot clattered upon the stones;
The other padded in his dogged stride:
The boot was gone, the sock hung frayed in shreds
About his ankle, the foot was blood and earth;
And never a limp, not the least flinch, to tell
The wounded pulp hit stone at every step.
His clothes were tattered and his rent skin showed,
Harrowed with thorns. His face was pale as putty,
Thrown far back; clots of drooping spittle foamed
On his mustache, and his hair hung in tails,
Mired with sweat; and sightless in their sockets
His eyeballs turned up white, as dull as pebbles.
Evenly and doggedly he trotted,
And as he went he moaned. Then out of sight
Round a corner he swerved, and out of hearing.
—"The law should have a say to that, by God!"

## JAMES STEPHENS

James Stephens was born in Dublin in February, 1882. His youth was difficult, his livelihood precarious. Stephens was "discovered" in an office and saved from clerical slavery by George Russell ("Æ"). Always a poet, many of Stephens's most poetic moments are in his highly colored prose. And yet, although the finest of his novels, *The Crock of Gold* (1912), contains more wild fantasy and quaint imagery than his verse, his *Insurrections* (1909) and *The Hill of Vision* (1912) reveal a rebellious spirit that is at

once hotly ironic and coolly whimsical. *Green Branches* (1916) and *Reincarnations* (1918)—the latter being free adaptations from the Gaelic—are persuasive volumes of his verse.

*Collected Poems* (1926) discloses two strongly differentiated personalities. There is the familiar and well-beloved Irish gamin, intimate with goats and gods, the play-boy of the roads, deferential to rabbits and lesser folk, impudent to the universe. There is, also, the less popular but more sizeable poet, the author of "The Crest Jewel," "In Waste Places," "The Main Deep" with its surging rhythm held in a few syllables, and "A Prelude and a Song" which moves with the gentle solemnity of a river. Traces of Blake are in the later Stephens; the poet, discarding his light grotesquerie, becomes the seer. A less amusing singer is the result, but a more impassioned one. In youth Stephens delighted in gay mischiefs, pranking with unnatural phenomena; in maturity he is concerned with nothing less than elemental truths.

Both personalities combine in the prose fictions for which Stephens is famous. *Deirdre* (1923) and *In the Land of Youth* (1924) continue the re-creations from the Irish folk- and fairy-tales. *Hunger* (1918), originally published under the pseudonym "James Esse," was incorporated in the somber collection of short stories *Etched in Moonlight* (1928) which, curiously enough, was poorly received in England and was an enormous success in America. An edition of his *Irish Fairy Tales* was arranged for children.

Stephens's final characteristic is his delightful blend of incongruities—he successfully mingles the bizarre, the buoyant and the profound. No more vigorous imagination has come out of Ireland since J. M. Synge.

## THE SHELL

And then I pressed the shell
Close to my ear
And listened well,
And straightway like a bell
Came low and clear
The slow, sad murmur of the distant seas,
Whipped by an icy breeze
Upon a shore
Wind-swept and desolate.
It was a sunless strand that never bore
The footprint of a man,
Nor felt the weight
Since time began

Of any human quality or stir
Save what the dreary winds and waves incur.
And in the hush of waters was the sound
Of pebbles rolling round,
For ever rolling with a hollow sound.
And bubbling sea-weeds as the waters go
Swish to and fro
Their long, cold tentacles of slimy gray.
There was no day,
Nor ever came a night
Setting the stars alight
To wonder at the moon:
Was twilight only and the frightened croon,
Smitten to whimpers, of the dreary wind
And waves that journeyed blind—
And then I loosed my ear . . . O, it was sweet
To hear a cart go jolting down the street.

## WHAT THOMAS AN BUILE SAID IN A PUB

I saw God. Do you doubt it?
  Do you dare to doubt it?
I saw the Almighty Man. His hand
Was resting on a mountain, and
He looked upon the World and all about it:
I saw him plainer than you see me now,
  You mustn't doubt it.

He was not satisfied;
  His look was all dissatisfied.
His beard swung on a wind far out of sight
Behind the world's curve, and there was light
Most fearful from His forehead, and He sighed,
"That star went always wrong, and from the start
  I was dissatisfied."

He lifted up His hand—
  I say He heaved a dreadful hand
Over the spinning Earth. Then I said, "Stay,
You must not strike it, God; I'm in the way;

And I will never move from where I stand."
He said, "Dear child, I feared that you were dead,"
And stayed His hand.

## TO THE FOUR COURTS, PLEASE

The driver rubbed at his nettly chin
With a huge, loose forefinger, crooked and black,
And his wobbly, violet lips sucked in,
And puffed out again and hung down slack:
One fang shone through his lop-sided smile,
In his little pouched eye flickered years of guile.

And the horse, poor beast, it was ribbed and forked,
And its ears hung down, and its eyes were old,
And its knees were knuckly, and as we talked
It swung the stiff neck that could scarcely hold
Its big, skinny head up—then I stepped in,
And the driver climbed to his seat with a grin.

God help the horse and the driver too,
And the people and beasts who have never a friend,
For the driver easily might have been you,
And the horse be me by a different end.
And nobody knows how their days will cease,
And the poor, when they're old, have little of peace.

## LITTLE THINGS

Little things that run and quail
And die in silence and despair;

Little things that fight and fail
And fall on earth and sea and air;

All trapped and frightened little things,
The mouse, the coney, hear our prayer.

As we forgive those done to us,
The lamb, the linnet, and the hare,

Forgive us all our trespasses,
Little creatures everywhere.

## THE RED-HAIRED MAN'S WIFE

I have taken that vow—
  And you were my friend
But yesterday—now
  All that's at an end,
And you are my husband, and claim me, and I must depend.

Yesterday I was free,
  Now you, as I stand,
Walk over to me
  And take hold of my hand.
You look at my lips, your eyes are too bold, your smile is too
    bland.

My old name is lost,
  My distinction of race:
Now the line has been crossed,
  Must I step to your pace?
Must I walk as you list, and obey and smile up in your face?

All the white and the red
  Of my cheeks you have won;
All the hair of my head,
  And my feet, tho' they run,
Are yours, and you own me and end me just as I begun.

Must I bow when you speak,
  Be silent and hear,
Inclining my cheek
  And incredulous ear
To your voice, and command, and behest, hold your lightest
    wish dear?

I am woman, but still
  Am alive, and can feel
Every intimate thrill
  That is woe or is weal.
I, aloof, and divided, apart, standing far, can I kneel?

If not, I shall know,
I shall surely find out,
And your world will throw
In disaster and rout;
I am woman and glory and beauty, I mystery, terror, and doubt.

I am separate still,
I am I and not you:
And my mind and my will,
As in secret they grew,
Still are secret, unreached and untouched and not subject to you.

## HATE

My enemy came nigh,
And I
Stared fiercely in his face.
My lips went writhing back in a grimace,
And stern I watched him with a narrow eye.
Then, as I turned away, my enemy,
That bitter heart and savage, said to me:
"Some day, when this is past,
When all the arrows that we have are cast,
We may ask one another why we hate,
And fail to find a story to relate.
It may seem to us then a mystery
That we could hate each other."
Thus said he,
And did not turn away,
Waiting to hear what I might have to say.
But I fled quickly, fearing if I stayed
I might have kissed him as I would a maid.

## THE WATCHER

A rose for a young head,
A ring for a bride,
Joy for the homestead
Clean and wide—

Who's that waiting
In the rain outside?

A heart for an old friend,
A hand for the new:
Love can to earth lend
Heaven's hue—
Who's that standing
In the silver dew?

A smile for the parting,
A tear as they go,
God's sweethearting
Ends just so—
Who's that watching
Where the black winds blow?

He who is waiting
In the rain outside,
He who is standing
Where the dew drops wide,
He who is watching
In the wind must ride
(Tho' the pale hands cling)
With the rose
And the ring
And the bride,
Must ride
With the red of the rose,
And the gold of the ring,
And the lips and the hair of the bride.

## RIGHTEOUS ANGER

The lanky hank of a she in the inn over there
Nearly killed me for asking the loan of a glass of beer:
May the devil grip the whey-faced slut by the hair,
And beat bad manners out of her skin for a year.

That parboiled imp, with the hardest jaw you will see
On virtue's path, and a voice that would rasp the dead,
Came roaring and raging the minute she looked at me,
And threw me out of the house on the back of my head!

If I asked her master he'd give me a cask a day;
But she with the beer at hand, not a gill would arrange!
May she marry a ghost and bear him a kitten and may
The High King of Glory permit her to get the mange.

## THE MAIN-DEEP

The long rólling,
Steady-póuring,
Deep-trenchéd
Green billow:

The wide-topped,
Unbróken,
Green-glacid,
Slow-sliding.

Cold-flushing,
On—on—on—
Chill-rushing,
Hush-hushing,

Hush—hushing. . . .

## ODELL

My mind is sad and weary thinking how
The griffins of the Gael went over the sea
From noble Eiré, and are fighting now
In France and Flanders and in Germany.

If they, 'mid whom I sported without dread,
Were home I would not mind what foe might do,
Or fear tax-man Odell would seize my bed
To pay the hearth-rate that is overdue.

I pray to Him who, in the haughty hour
Of Babel, threw confusion on each tongue,
That I may see our princes back in power,
And see Odell, the tax-collector, hung.

## BLUE BLOOD

(*After O'Bruaidar*)

We thought at first, this man is a king for sure,
Or the branch of a mighty and ancient and famous lineage—
That silly, sulky, illiterate, black-avised boor
Who was hatched by foreign vulgarity under a hedge.

The good men of Clare were drinking his health in a flood,
And gazing with me in awe of the princely lad,
And asking each other from what bluest blueness of blood
His daddy was squeezed, and the pa of the da of his dad?

We waited there, gaping and wondering, anxiously,
Until he'd stop eating and let the glad tidings out,
And the slack-jawed booby proved to the hilt that he
Was lout, son of lout, by old lout, and was da to a lout!

## THE CREST JEWEL

I

The leaf will wrinkle to decay
And crumble into dust away!

The rose, the lily, grow to eld,
And are, and are no more, beheld!

Nothing will stay! For, as the eye
Rests upon an object nigh,

It is not there to look upon!
It is mysteriously gone!

And, in its place, another thing
Apes its shape and fashioning!

II

All that the sun will breathe today
The moon will lip and wear away

Tonight. And all will re-begin
Tomorrow as the dawn comes in.

Is no beginning, middle-trend
Or argument to that or end.

No cause and no effect, and no
Reason why it should be so.

Or why it might be otherwise
To other minds or other eyes.

III

The soul can dream itself to be
Adrift upon an endless sea

Of day and night. The soul can seem
To be all things that it can dream!

Yet needs but look within to find
That which is steady in the wind,

That which the fire does not appal,
Which good and ill mourn not at all.

Which does not seek, or lack, or try.
And was not born, and cannot die!

IV

It has been writ in wisdom old—
This is the last word to be told:

—There is no dissolution! No
Creation! There are none in woe!

There is no teacher, teaching, taught!
Are none who long for, lack for aught!

Are none who pine for freedom! None
Are liberated under sun!

—And this is absolutely true
In Him who dreams in me and you.

## IN WASTE PLACES

As a naked man I go
Through the desert, sore afraid;
Holding high my head, although
I'm as frightened as a maid.

The lion crouches there! I saw
In barren rocks his amber eye!
He parts the cactus with his paw!
He stares at me as I go by!

He would pad upon my trace
If he thought I was afraid!
If he knew my hardy face
Veils the terrors of a maid.

He rises in the night-time, and
He stretches forth! He snuffs the air!
He roars! He leaps along the sand!
He creeps! He watches everywhere!

His burning eyes, his eyes of bale
Through the darkness I can see!
He lashes fiercely with his tail!
He makes again to spring at me!

I am the lion, and his lair!
I am the fear that frightens me!
I am the desert of despair!
And the night of agony!

Night or day, whate'er befall,
I must walk that desert land,
Until I dare my fear and call
The lion out to lick my hand.

Martin (Donisthorpe) Armstrong was born at Newcastle-on-Tyne, in 1882. He was educated at Cambridge and was associate literary editor of *The Spectator* from 1922 to 1924.

Besides being a poet, Armstrong is a prose writer of delicate nuances. His first publication was a volume of verse, *Exodus and other Poems* (1912), which, like the great majority of first offerings, was wholly without distinction. Even *Thirty New Poems*, which followed six years later, in 1918, lacked any dominating quality and it was not until the publication of *The Buzzards and Other Poems* (1921) that Armstrong began to interest his readers.

Although Armstrong has not ceased writing poetry, most of his work since *The Buzzards* has been in prose. *The Puppet Show* (1922) and *The Bazaar* (1924) are collections of short tales; *The Goat and Compasses* (1925) is a novel which has a country pub as its background.

Latterly, Armstrong has busied himself with larger prose forms, *The Stepson* (1927) being a full novel. A limited edition of *The Bird Catcher and Other Poems* appeared in 1929, *The Sleeping Fury*, his best novel, appearing at the same time. *The Fiery Dive* (1930) is a collection of short stories which play variations on Armstrong's favorite theme: the conflict between love and morality.

## FROST IN LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS

Lifeless, still, in the frosty air
The old stone houses round the square
Look out upon gray lawns whose grass
Is frozen to brittle blades of steel or glass;
And on black beds through whose ice-welded crust,
Hollow and hard, no gardener's spade could thrust;
And on black branches that forget to grow
And hang benumbed and hypnotized as though
The sap stood still. The very air seems dead,
All sound dried out of it. No ringing tread
Warms the numbed silence. Even the sun himself,
An orange disk in a gray frost-laden sky,
Hangs lightless like a plate upon a shelf.

This is not life. Some ghost of otherwhere
Takes shadowy substance from the frozen air
To hover briefly till the spell is broken.
A dream, a passing thought, a faint word spoken!

But suddenly from a corner of the square
A shimmering fount of sound leaps clean and rare,
A small thin frosty cheer like tinkling glass.
Is it the shouts of boys that pass
Running in file to slide on the icy curb,
Or dryads, sick for spring,
Wailing forlornly under the frozen herb?
O Light of Youth, O Flower of Life in Death!
We listen with bated breath.
So sad, so clear the delicate wistful spell!

Till frost lays hold on the sound and all is still.

### THE CAGE

Man, afraid to be alive,
Shuts his soul in senses five;
From fields of Uncreated Light
Into the crystal tower of Sight;
And from the roaring Songs of Space
Into the small, flesh-carven place
Of the Ear whose cave impounds
Only small and broken sounds;
And to his narrow sense of Touch
From Strength that held the stars in clutch;
And from the warm ambrosial Spice
Of flowers and fruits of Paradise
To the frail and fitful power
Of Tongue's and Nose's sweet and sour.
And toiling for a sordid wage
There in his self-created Cage.
Ah, how safely barred is he
From menace of Eternity.

## JOHN DRINKWATER

John Drinkwater was born in 1882, was educated at the Oxford High School, and was for a time in various Assurance Offices. His first book, *Poems* (1903), published at the age of 21, was followed by another collection of verse, *The Death of Leander* (1906).

Primarily a poetic dramatist, Drinkwater is best known as the

author of *Abraham Lincoln—A Play* (1919) founded on Lord Charnwood's masterly and analytical biography. He has published many volumes of poems, most of them meditative and elegiac in mood.

The best of his efforts were collected in *Poems*, 1908-14. Since this volume, Drinkwater has published seven volumes of verse beginning with *Tides* (1917) and *Seeds of Time* (1921). By 1929 he was the author of some forty volumes, including a biography, *Mr. Charles, King of England* (1926). His too prolific rhyming, compounded for the most part of colorless clichés, was assembled in *Collected Poems* (1923). *Collected Plays* appeared in 1925. Drinkwater has achieved a kind of fictionalized biography in theatrical, as distinguished from dramatic, form. His concern with the approved "great names"—Abraham Lincoln, Mary Stuart, Oliver Cromwell, Robert E. Lee, Robert Burns—leads him to inflate his plays with specious grandeur, an artificiality of posture and speech, the same quality which so often devitalizes his verse.

### RECIPROCITY

I do not think that skies and meadows are
Moral, or that the fixture of a star
Comes of a quiet spirit, or that trees
Have wisdom in their windless silences.
Yet these are things invested in my mood
With constancy, and peace, and fortitude,
That in my troubled season I can cry
Upon the wide composure of the sky,
And envy fields, and wish that I might be
As little daunted as a star or tree.

### A TOWN WINDOW

Beyond my window in the night
  Is but a drab inglorious street,
Yet there the frost and clean starlight
  As over Warwick woods are sweet.

Under the gray drift of the town
  The crocus works among the mold
As eagerly as those that crown
  The Warwick spring in flame and gold.

And when the tramway down the hill
Across the cobbles moans and rings,
There is about my window-sill
The tumult of a thousand wings.

## JAMES JOYCE

James Joyce was born in Dublin, February 2, 1882. He was educated at the Jesuit school at Clongowes Wood, Belvedere College and the Royal University of Dublin. He studied medicine in Paris (where he has lived since early manhood), discontinued his medical studies in the hope of becoming a professional singer, gave up singing to become a teacher in Berlitz Schools on the Continent, and published his first book in 1907.

This first volume was a volume of verse, *Chamber Music*, written in his early twenties, but not published in America until 1918. Admirers of Joyce point to the fact that, even in his most difficult prose, he has never ceased being the poet. His work in prose has received international attention and almost universal notoriety. *Dubliners* (1914) and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) were received with respect and little disapproval. But with *Ulysses* (1922) Joyce became a storm-center. His appraisers trod no middle way: they either asserted, and loudly, that he was an unqualifiedly great genius, or insisted, even more vociferously, that he was an obscene madman, whose writings were subversive and properly banned by the censor. This is not the place to enter so controversial a problem. It may, however, be stated that there can be no question regarding the importance of *Ulysses* both as an experimental art work and as a document of the times.

*Pomes Penyeach* (1927) resembles Joyce's later style only in its title. It is delicate, certain, and lyrical throughout. Like the early *Chamber Music*, the verse is conventional in theme, orthodox in treatment, harmonically simple, and the very antithesis of everything for which Joyce is celebrated.

### "I HEAR AN ARMY"

I hear an army charging upon the land,
And the thunder of horses plunging, foam about their knees:
Arrogant, in black armor, behind them stand,
Disdaining the reins, with fluttering whips, the charioteers.

They cry unto the night their battle-name:
I moan in sleep when I hear afar their whirling laughter.
They cleave the gloom of dreams, a blinding flame,
Clanging, clanging upon the heart as upon an anvil.

They come shaking in triumph their long, green hair:
They come out of the sea and run shouting by the shore.
My heart, have you no wisdom thus to despair?
My love, my love, my love, why have you left me alone?

## ALL DAY I HEAR

All day I hear the noise of waters
Making moan,
Sad as the sea-bird is when, going
Forth alone,
He hears the winds cry to the waters'
Monotone.

The gray winds, the cold winds are blowing
Where I go.
I hear the noise of many waters
Far below.
All day, all night, I hear them flowing
To and fro.

## "O SWEETHEART, HEAR YOU"

O sweetheart, hear you
Your lover's tale;
A man shall have sorrow
When friends him fail.

For he shall know then
Friends be untrue
And a little ashes
Their words come to.

But one unto him
Will softly move
And softly woo him
In ways of love.

His hand is under
  Her smooth round breast;
So he who has sorrow
  Shall have rest.

## SONG

O, it was out by Donnycarney,
  When the bat flew from tree to tree,
My love and I did walk together,
  And sweet were the words she said to me.

Along with us the summer wind
  Went murmuring—O, happily!—
But softer than the breath of summer
  Was the kiss she gave to me.

## ON THE BEACH AT FONTANA

Wind whines and whines the shingle,
The crazy pierstakes groan;
A senile sea numbers each single
Slimesilvered stone.

From whining wind and colder
Gray sea I wrap him warm
And touch his trembling fineboned shoulder
And boyish arm.

Around us fear, descending
Darkness of fear above
And in my heart how deep unending
Ache of love!

## FLOOD

Goldbrown upon the sated flood
The rockvine clusters lift and sway,
Vast wings above the lambent waters brood
Of sullen day.

A waste of waters ruthlessly
Sways and uplifts its weedy mane
Where brooding day stares down upon the sea
In dull disdain.

Uplift and sway, O golden vine,
Your clustered fruits to love's full flood,
Lambent and vast and ruthless as in thine
Incertitude!

## FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG

Francis (E.) Brett Young was born in 1884, educated at the University of Birmingham, and trained as a doctor. His novels show the varying influences of Arnold Bennett and Joseph Conrad, but after *The Crescent Moon* (1918), he developed a manner of his own. *Sea Horses* (1925) and *Portrait of Claire*, the American edition of which was called *Love Is Enough* (1927) established his reputation.

*Five Degrees South* (1917) and *Poems* 1916-1918 (1919) contain the best of his verse, some of which appeared in the anthologies *Georgian Poetry*. His verse is lifted—or, as some have maintained, burdened—with a message, his motto being "Trust in the true and fiery spirit of man."

### LOCHANILAUN

This is the image of my last content:
My soul shall be a little lonely lake,
So hidden that no shadow of man may break
The folding of its mountain battlement;
Only the beautiful and innocent
Whiteness of sea-born cloud drooping to shake
Cool rain upon the reed-beds, or the wake
Of churned cloud in a howling wind's descent.
For there shall be no terror in the night
When stars that I have loved are born in me,
And cloudy darkness I will hold most fair;
But this shall be the end of my delight:—
That you, my lovely one, may stoop and see
Your image in the mirrored beauty there.

Jack (John) Collings Squire was born April 2, 1884, at Plymouth, of Devonian ancestry. He was educated at Blundell's and Cambridge University, and became known as a remarkably adroit parodist. His *Imaginary Speeches* (1912) and *Tricks of the Trade* (1917) are amusing parodies and, what is more, excellent criticism. He first contributed to and then edited *The New Statesman*, founding *The London Mercury* (a monthly of which he is editor) in November, 1919. Under the pseudonym "Solomon Eagle" he wrote a page of literary criticism every week for six years, many of these papers being collected in his volume, *Books in General* (1919).

His original poetry is intellectual but simple, occasionally metaphysical and always interesting in its variable rhythms. A collection of his best verse up to 1919 was published under the title, *Poems: First Series*. A subsequent *Poems: Second Series* appeared in 1921.

Squire's *Collected Parodies, American Poems and Others, Essays at Large* all appeared in 1923. Since that year Squire has published little original work, busying himself almost exclusively with editing and anthologizing. *Apes and Peacocks* (1930) is his shrewd collection of the burlesques and satires of other parodists.

## A HOUSE

Now very quietly, and rather mournfully,
In clouds of hyacinth the sun retires,
And all the stubblefields that were so warm to him
Keep but in memory their borrowed fires.

And I, the traveler, break, still unsatisfied,
From that faint exquisite celestial strand,
And turn and see again the only dwelling-place
In this wide wilderness of darkening land.

The house, that house, O now what change has come to it.
Its crude red-brick façade, its roof of slate;
What imperceptible swift hand has given it
A new, a wonderful, a queenly state?

No hand has altered it, that parallelogram,
So inharmonious, so ill-arranged;
That hard blue roof in shape and color's what it was;
No, it is not that any line has changed.

Only that loneliness is now accentuate
And, as the dusk unveils the heaven's deep cave,
This small world's feebleness fills me with awe again,
And all man's energies seem very brave.

And this mean edifice, which some dull architect
Built for an ignorant earth-turning hind,
Takes on the quality of that magnificent
Unshakable dauntlessness of human kind.

Darkness and stars will come, and long the night will be,
Yet imperturbable that house will rest,
Avoiding gallantly the stars' chill scrutiny,
Ignoring secrets in the midnight's breast.

Thunders may shudder it, and winds demoniac
May howl their menaces, and hail descend:
Yet it will bear with them, serenely, steadfastly,
Not even scornfully, and wait the end.

And all a universe of nameless messengers
From unknown distances may whisper fear,
And it will imitate immortal permanence,
And stare and stare ahead and scarcely hear.

It stood there yesterday; it will tomorrow, too,
When there is none to watch, no alien eyes
To watch its ugliness assume a majesty
From this great solitude of evening skies.

So lone, so very small, with worlds and worlds around,
While life remains to it prepared to outface
Whatever awful unconjectured mysteries
May hide and wait for it in time and space.

## SONNET

There was an Indian, who had known no change,
Who strayed content along a sunlit beach
Gathering shells. He heard a sudden strange
Commingled noise: looked up; and gasped for speech.

For in the bay, where nothing was before,
Moved on the sea, by magic, huge canoes,
With bellying cloths on poles, and not one oar,
And fluttering colored signs and clambering crews.

And he, in fear, this naked man alone,
His fallen hands forgetting all their shells,
His lips gone pale, knelt low behind a stone,
And stared, and saw, and did not understand,
Columbus's doom-burdened caravels
Slant to the shore, and all their seamen land.

## A FRESH MORNING

Now am I a tin whistle
Through which God blows,
And I wish to God I were a trumpet
—But why, God only knows.

## PROLOGUE: IN DARKNESS

With my sleeping belovèd huddled beside me, why do I lie awake,
Listening to the loud clock's hurry in the darkness, and feeling my heart's fierce ache
That beats one response to the brain's many questionings, and in solitude bears the weight
Of all the world's evil and misery and frustration, and the senseless pressure of fate?

Is it season of plowing and sowing, this long vigil, that so certainly it recurs?
Is this unsought return of a pain that was ended, is it here that a song first stirs?
Can it be that from this, when tonight's gone from memory, there will spring of a sudden, some time,
Like a silver lily breaking from black deadly waters, the thin-blown shape of a rhyme?

Another remarkable poet whose early death was a blow to English literature, James Elroy Flecker, was born in London, November 5, 1884. He studied at Trinity College, Oxford, specialized in Oriental languages at Cambridge, and went to Constantinople in the Consular Service in 1910.

The fact that the remainder of his life was spent in the East has a direct bearing on Flecker's work—his play *Hassan,* one of the most powerful and brilliantly colored modern dramas, being the definite reflection of his adopted Orientalism.

Possibly due to low vitality, Flecker found little to interest him but a reaction against realism in verse, a delight in verbal craftsmanship, and a passion for technical perfection—especially the deliberate technique of the French Parnassians whom he worshiped. Flecker was opposed to any art that was emotional or that "taught" anything. "The poet's business," he declared, "is not to save the soul of man, but to make it worth saving." Flecker's desire to be objective rather than passionate was scarcely consistent with his actual creation, even though he maintained that "the Parnassians raised the technique of their art to a height which enabled them to express the subtlest ideas in powerful and simple verse." Technique and manner were his abstract gods.

The advent of the war began to make Flecker's verse more personal and romantic. The tuberculosis that finally killed him at Davos Platz, Switzerland, January 3, 1915, forced him from an Olympian disinterest to a deep concern with life and death. He passionately denied that he was weary of living "as the pallid poets are," and he was attempting higher flights of song when his singing ceased altogether.

Flecker's two notable volumes are *The Golden Journey to Samarkand* (1913) and *The Old Ships* (1915). A *Collected Poems,* with an autobiographical introduction and notes by J. C. Squire, was published in 1917 and drew fresh attention to Flecker's half-classical, half-romantic and always vivid touch.

### THE OLD SHIPS

I have seen old ships sail like swans asleep
Beyond the village which men still call Tyre,
With leaden age o'ercargoed, dipping deep
For Famagusta and the hidden sun
That rings black Cyprus with a lake of fire;

And all those ships were certainly so old—
Who knows how oft with squat and noisy gun,
Questing brown slaves or Syrian oranges,
The pirate Genoese
Hell-raked them till they rolled
Blood, water, fruit and corpses up the hold.
But now through friendly seas they softly run,
Painted the mid-sea blue or shore-sea green,
Still patterned with the vine and grapes in gold.

But I have seen,
Pointing her shapely shadows from the dawn
And image tumbled on a rose-swept bay,
A drowsy ship of some yet older day;
And, wonder's breath indrawn,
Thought I—who knows—who knows—but in that same
(Fished up beyond Aeaea, patched up new
—Stern painted brighter blue—)
That talkative, bald-headed seaman came
(Twelve patient comrades sweating at the oar)
From Troy's doom-crimson shore,
And with great lies about his wooden horse
Set the crew laughing, and forgot his course.

It was so old a ship—who knows, who knows?
—And yet so beautiful, I watched in vain
To see the mast burst open with a rose,
And the whole deck put on its leaves again.

## STILLNESS

When the words rustle no more,
  And the last work's done,
When the bolt lies deep in the door,
  And Fire, our Sun,
Falls on the dark-laned meadows of the floor;

When from the clock's last chime to the next chime
  Silence beats his drum,
And Space with gaunt gray eyes and her brother Time
  Wheeling and whispering come,
She with the mold of form and he with the loom of rhyme:

Then twittering out in the night my thought-birds flee,
I am emptied of all my dreams:
I only hear Earth turning, only see
Ether's long bankless streams,
And only know I should drown if you
Laid not your hand on me.

## THE WAR SONG OF THE SARACENS

We are they who come faster than fate: we are they who ride early or late:
We storm at your ivory gate: Pale Kings of the Sunset, beware!
Not on silk nor in samet we lie, not in curtained solemnity die
Among women who chatter and cry, and children who mumble a prayer.
But we sleep by the ropes of the camp, and we rise with a shout, and we tramp
With the sun or the moon for a lamp, and the spray of the wind in our hair.

From the lands, where the elephants are, to the forts of Merou and Balghar,
Our steel we have brought and our star to shine on the ruins of Ruhm.
We have marched from the Indus to Spain, and, by God, we will go there again;
We have stood on the shore of the plain where the Waters of Destiny boom.
A mart of destruction we made at Jalúla where men were afraid,
For death was a difficult trade, and the sword was a broker of doom;

And the Spear was a Desert Physician who cured not a few of ambition,
And drave not a few to perdition with medicine bitter and strong;
And the shield was a grief to the fool and as bright as a desolate pool,

And as straight as the rock of Stamboul when their cavalry thundered along:
For the coward was drowned with the brave when our battle sheered up like a wave,
And the dead to the desert we gave, and the glory to God in our song.

## TENEBRIS INTERLUCENTEM

A linnet who had lost her way
Sang on a blackened bough in Hell,
Till all the ghosts remembered well
The trees, the wind, the golden day.

At last they knew that they had died
When they heard music in that land,
And some one there stole forth a hand
To draw a brother to his side.

## TO A POET A THOUSAND YEARS HENCE

I who am dead a thousand years,
And wrote this sweet archaic song,
Send you my words for messengers
The way I shall not pass along.

I care not if you bridge the seas,
Or ride secure the cruel sky,
Or build consummate palaces
Of metal or of masonry.

But have you wine and music still,
And statues and a bright-eyed love,
And foolish thoughts of good and ill,
And prayers to them who sit above?

How shall we conquer? Like a wind
That falls at eve our fancies blow,
And old Maeonides the blind
Said it three thousand years ago.

O friend unseen, unborn, unknown,
Student of our sweet English tongue,
Read out my words at night, alone:
I was a poet, I was young.

Since I can never see your face,
And never shake you by the hand,
I send my soul through time and space
To greet you. You will understand.

## THE TOWN WITHOUT A MARKET

There lies afar behind a western hill
The town without a Market, white and still;
For six feet long and not a third as high
Are those small habitations. There stood I,
Waiting to hear the citizens beneath
Murmur and sigh and speak through tongueless teeth.
When all the world lay burning in the sun
I heard their voices speak to me. Said one:
"Bright lights I loved and colors, I who find
That death is darkness, and has struck me blind."
Another cried: "I used to sing and play,
But here the world is silent, day by day."
And one: "On earth I could not see or hear,
But with my fingers touched what I was near,
And knew things round and soft, and brass from gold,
And dipped my hand in water, to feel cold,
And thought the grave would cure me, and was glad
When the time came to lose what joy I had."
Soon all the voices of a hundred dead
Shouted in wrath together. Some one said,
"I care not, but the girl was sweet to kiss
At evening in the meadows." "Hard it is,"
Another cried, "to hear no hunting horn.
Ah me! the horse, the hounds, and the great gray morn
When I rode out a-hunting." And one sighed,
"I did not see my son before I died."
A boy said, "I was strong and swift to run:
Now they have tied my feet; what have I done?"

A man, "But it was good to arm and fight
And storm their cities in the dead of night."
An old man said, "I read my books all day,
But death has taken all my books away."
And one, "The popes and prophets did not well
To cheat poor dead men with false hopes of hell.
Better the whips of fire that hiss and rend
Than painless void proceeding to no end."
I smiled to hear them restless, I who sought
Peace. For I had not loved, I had not fought,
And books are vanities, and manly strength
A gathered flower. God grants us peace at length!
I heard no more, and turned to leave their town
Before the chill came, and the sun went down.
Then rose a whisper, and I seemed to know
A timorous man, buried long years ago.
"On Earth I used to shape the Thing that seems.
Master of all men, give me back my dreams.
Give me the world that never failed me then,
The hills I made and peopled with tall men,
The palace that I built and called my home,
My cities which could break the pride of Rome,
The three queens hidden in the sacred tree,
And those white cloudy folk who sang to me,
O death, why hast thou covered me so deep?
I was thy sister's child, the friend of Sleep."

Then said my heart, Death takes and cannot give.
Dark with no dream is hateful: let me live!

## ANNA WICKHAM

Anna Wickham was born in Wimbledon, Surrey, in 1884. She went to Australia at six, returned when she was twenty-one, studied for Opera in Paris with De Reszke and suddenly, after a few years of marriage, became a poet. In a burst of creative energy she wrote nine hundred poems in four years.

Her first two books (*The Contemplative Quarry*, 1915, and *The Man with a Hammer*, 1916) were republished in America in one volume, *The Contemplative Quarry* (1921). This was followed by *The Little Old House* (1922). Another volume, *The Noiseless Pro-*

*peller,* is in preparation. The most casual reading of Anna Wickham's work reveals the strength of her candor. The poems could scarcely be put in the category of "charming" verse; they are astringent and sometimes harsh; gnarled frequently by their own violences of mood. Her lines present the picture of woman struggling between dreams and domesticity; they are acutely sensitive, restless, analytical. The very tone of her poetry reflects the disturbed music and the nervous protests of her age.

Sometimes her verse tends toward mere introverted gossip, but usually it is as just in phrase as it is fearless in thought. Much of her poetry is a poetry of the senses, and in this she seems kin to D. H. Lawrence. But where Lawrence, lost in the "mazes of the female mystery," is sexually tormented, Anna Wickham, unhampered in her sensuality, delights even in her torments. She turns upon men for maintaining a traditional attitude, not to the real women of today, but to creatures half-historical, half-illusory; she berates women for fostering this tendency, thus weakening men and enchaining themselves.

> We, vital women, are no more content
> Bound, first to passion, then to sentiment.
> Of you, the masters, slaves in our poor eyes
> Who most are moved by women's tricks and lies,
> We ask our freedom. In good sooth,
> We only ask to know and speak the truth!

Yet Mrs. Wickham does more than "only ask to know and speak the truth." Her angers and querulous revulsions cannot choke the lyric impulse. Time and again she makes songs that are sweet without being sentimental, almost perfect in their simple cadences.

But for the most part she is harassed and fluctuating, torn between being the instrument of love and love itself; making, with a wry determination, an unhappy compromise between the conflicting claims of modernity and maternity. She is rarely objective; even such dramatic projections as "Meditation at Kew" and the acrid humor of "Nervous Prostration" are too bitter to be impersonal. Out of all her poems, the plangent as well as the powerful, rises this cry which is also an apologia:

> Let it be something for my song
> If it is sometimes swift and strong.

"Self-Analysis" and "The Affinity" are this remarkable and unappreciated poet *in petto.* Divided between her desire for mastery and being mastered, for perfection and her distrust of it, she typifies the woman who has repudiated order but is frustrated in lawlessness; self-condemning, self-contradicting.

Although Mrs. Wickham has written longer poems, her terse, pungently flavored lyrics are most characteristic of her. She is a psychologist by intention, but a psychologist who has not forgotten how to sing.

### CREATRIX

Let us thank Almighty God
For the woman with the rod.
Who was ever and is now
Strong, essential as the plow.
She shall goad and she shall drive,
So to keep man's soul alive.
Amoris with her scented dress
Beckons, in pretty wantonness;
But the wife drives, nor can man tell
What hands so urge, what powers compel.

### SONG

I was so chill, and overworn, and sad,
To be a lady was the only joy I had.
I walked the street as silent as a mouse,
Buying fine clothes, and fittings for the house.

But since I saw my love
I wear a simple dress,
And happily I move
Forgetting weariness.

### SELF-ANALYSIS

The tumult of my fretted mind
Gives me expression of a kind;
But it is faulty, harsh, not plain—
My work has the incompetence of pain.

I am consumed with a slow fire,
For righteousness is my desire;
Towards that good goal I cannot whip my will,
I am a tired horse that jibs upon a hill.

I desire Virtue, though I love her not—
I have no faith in her when she is got:
I fear that she will bind and make me slave
And send me songless to the sullen grave.

I am like a man who fears to take a wife,
And frets his soul with wantons all his life.
With rich, unholy foods I stuff my maw;
When I am sick, then I believe in law.

I fear the whiteness of straight ways—
I think there is no color in unsullied days.
My silly sins I take for my heart's ease,
And know my beauty in the end disease.

Of old there were great heroes, strong in fight,
Who, tense and sinless, kept a fire alight:
God of our hope, in their great name,
Give me the straight and ordered flame!

## SEHNSUCHT[1]

Because of body's hunger are we born,
And by contriving hunger are we fed;
Because of hunger is our work well done,
As so are songs well sung, and things well said.
Desire and longing are the whips of God—
God save us all from death when we are fed.

## WEAPONS

Up the crag
In the screaming wind,
Naked and bleeding
I fought blind.

Then at dawn
On the snowy height
I seized a spear
By the eastern light.

[1] *Sehnsucht:* Longing.

On I trudged
In the eye of the sun,
Past the cromlech
I found a gun.

Then I strayed
In the cities of men,
In the house of my Love
I found a pen!

## THE LAST ROUND[1]

Clasp you the God within yourself
And hold it fast;
After all combats shall ye come
To this good fight at last.
God is a mighty wrestler
He battles in the night;
Not till the end shall it be known
What foe you fight.
When God in you is overthrown
He'll show a light
And claim the victor for his own
And crown the fight.

## TO A CRUCIFIX

O courteous Christ—Kind guest, most gracious host,
Which of these ugly things had pained you most
That silly priests repeat your words for gain
Or in your house hang symbols of your pain?

How had you withered at the servile breath
Spent in the praises of your common death,
Scorning these claims to honor and to pride
For such a death as multitudes have died.

Not in the cross was such indignity
As these acclaiming Christian ages see,
When you who lived for cure and for relief
Are most remembered for your wounds and grief.

[1] In its similarity of theme and difference of treatment, it is interesting to compare this poem with Ezra Pound's "Ballad for Gloom."

## MEDITATION AT KEW

Alas! for all the pretty women who marry dull men,
Go into the suburbs and never come out again,
Who lose their pretty faces, and dim their pretty eyes,
Because no one has skill or courage to organize.

What do these pretty women suffer when they marry?
They bear a boy who is like Uncle Harry,
A girl, who is like Aunt Eliza, and not new,
These old, dull races must breed true.

I would enclose a common in the sun,
And let the young wives out to laugh and run;
I would steal their dull clothes and go away,
And leave the pretty naked things to play.

Then I would make a contract with hard Fate
That they see all the men in the world and choose a mate,
And I would summon all the pipers in the town
That they dance with Love at a feast, and dance him down.

From the gay unions of choice
We'd have a race of splendid beauty, and of thrilling voice.
The World whips frank, gay love with rods,
But frankly, gayly shall we get the gods.

## THE AFFINITY

I have to thank God I'm a woman,
For in these ordered days a woman only
Is free to be very hungry, very lonely.

It is sad for Feminism, but still clear
That man, more often than woman, is pioneer.
If I would confide a new thought,
First to a man must it be brought.

Now, for our sins, it is my bitter fate
That such a man wills soon to be my mate,
And so of friendship is quick end:
When I have gained a love I lose a friend.

It is well within the order of things
That man should listen when his mate sings;
But the true male never yet walked
Who liked to listen when his mate talked.

I would be married to a full man,
As would all women since the world began;
But from a wealth of living I have proved
I must be silent, if I would be loved.

Now of my silence I have much wealth,
I have to do my thinking all by stealth.
My thoughts may never see the day;
My mind is like a catacomb where early Christians pray.

And of my silence I have much pain,
But of these pangs I have great gain;
For I must take to drugs or drink,
Or I must write the things I think.

If my sex would let me speak,
I would be very lazy and most weak;
I should speak only, and the things I spoke
Would fill the air awhile, and clear like smoke.

The things I think now I write down,
And some day I will show them to the Town.
When I am sad I make thought clear;
I can re-read it all next year.

I have to thank God I'm a woman,
For in these ordered days a woman only
Is free to be very hungry, very lonely.

## THE TIRED WOMAN

O my Lover, blind me,
Take your cords and bind me,
Then drive me through a silent land
With the compelling of your open hand!

There is too much of sound, too much for sight,
In thundrous lightnings of this night,
There is too much of freedom for my feet,
Bruised by the stones of this disordered street.

I know that there is sweetest rest for me,
In silent fields, and in captivity.
O Lover! drive me through a stilly land
With the compelling of your open hand.

## DIVORCE

A voice from the dark is calling me.
In the close house I nurse a fire.
Out in the dark, cold winds rush free,
To the rock heights of my desire.
I smother in the house in the valley below,
Let me out to the night, let me go, let me go!

Spirits that ride the sweeping blast,
Frozen in rigid tenderness,
Wait! For I leave the fire at last,
My little-love's warm loneliness.
I smother in the house in the valley below,
Let me out in the night, let me go, let me go!

High on the hills are beating drums,
Clear from a line of marching men
To the rock's edge the hero comes.
He calls me, and he calls again.
On the hill there is fighting, victory, or quick death,
In the house is the fire, which I fan with sick breath.
I smother in the house in the valley below,
Let me out in the dark, let me go, let me go!

## AFTER ANNUNCIATION

Rest, little Guest,
Beneath my breast.
Feed, sweet Seed,
At your need.

I took Love for my lord
And this is my reward,
My body is good earth,
That you, dear Plant, have birth.

## THE CHERRY-BLOSSOM WAND

I will pluck from my tree a cherry-blossom wand,
And carry it in my merciless hand,
So I will drive you, so bewitch your eyes,
With a beautiful thing that can never grow wise.

Light are the petals that fall from the bough,
And lighter the love that I offer you now;
In a spring day shall the tale be told
Of the beautiful things that will never grow old.

The blossoms shall fall in the night wind,
And I will leave you so, to be kind:
Eternal in beauty are short-lived flowers,
Eternal in beauty, these exquisite hours.

I will pluck from my tree a cherry-blossom wand,
And carry it in my merciless hand,
So I will drive you, so bewitch your eyes,
With a beautiful thing that shall never grow wise.

## SOUL'S LIBERTY

He who has lost soul's liberty
Concerns himself for ever with his property,
As, when the folk have lost both dance and song,
Women clean useless pots the whole day long.

Thank God for war and fire
To burn the silly objects of desire,
That from the ruin of a church thrown down
We see God clear and high above the town.

## TO MEN

*(Variation on Ella Wheeler Wilcox, after a poem of the same name)*

Sirs—though we fail you—let us live;
Be just, have pity, and forgive.
Think how poor Mother Eve was brought
To being as God's afterthought.

God had a vast expanse of clay
To fashion Adam's primal day;
Yet was the craftsman's limit shown
His image could not live alone.

Yet God supports eternal life
Without the comfort of a wife;
So it was proved e'er we began
God had miscalculated man.

And of his fault, he took a part
Formed woman's brain and woman's heart
Of Imperfection—vainly planned—
To love, to serve, to understand.

How can you wonder, if we stray
Through coward night and sloven day
When power in us can but reflect
God's wifelessness and man's defect.

Had lonely God when earth was new
Some blest remembrances of two,
He had not made one half of life
A shambles and a hell-stung strife.

. . . . .

Do you remember, O my Dear,
The seventh night of our first year
The night, when my first son was given
With ecstasy to tutor Heaven—

Had God loved thus, all Hell were blind
And famine, lust and murder kind.
Come, my co-adjutor, beloved smith,
Raise thou thy hammer—break the myth.

There is no marvel of creation
Exists beyond our full relation—
Yet God shall strengthen from his sins
To breed us new and breed us twins.

Thou bungling artificer yet,
Thou shalt be artist and beget
And on the form of Chaos lie
To wash the earth and raise the sky.

Not equal I, but counterpart
And in relation is my heart
Perfect with man's—as with his mind—
Mine is all strong to lose and bind.

Come then, my husband here and rest
On my so well-remolded breast.
At morning we'll go out and see
How well God works for you and me.

## THE SINGER

If I had peace to sit and sing,
Then I could make a lovely thing;
But I am stung with goads and whips,
So I build songs like iron ships.

Let it be something for my song,
If it is sometimes swift and strong.

## ENVOI

God, thou great symmetry,
Who put a biting lust in me
From whence my sorrows spring,
For all the frittered days
That I have spent in shapeless ways,
Give me one perfect thing.

D(avid) H(erbert) Lawrence was born September 17, 1885, in the colliery town of Eastwood, a drab hamlet on the border between Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. The son of workers, his novels continually reflect the rural and industrial backgrounds of his boyhood. Lawrence obtained a scholarship at the Nottingham High School and at sixteen became a pupil-teacher. After a short appointment in a London school, he abandoned teaching for literature.

Even in his mid-twenties—in *The White Peacock* (1909), *Love Poems and Others* (1913) and first of all, in *Sons and Lovers* (1913)—Lawrence pronounced the strain with which he was to be so closely identified. The two volumes of *Collected Poems* (1929) are autobiographically candid, completely characterizing. No one in his generation has pursued the cry of sex so passionately, so painfully as D. H. Lawrence; and no one has been more confused by it. A magnificently equipped craftsman, a writer *pur sang*, his gamut has never extended. His novels, with two unimportant exceptions and, more explicitly, his poems are concerned with little else than the dark fire, the broken body, the struggle, death and resurrection of crucified flesh, the recurring cycle of fulfillment and frustration. This is Lawrence's theme, a theme which he varies with great skill, but one which he can neither leave nor fully control. It is not merely his passion, it is his obsession.

This is as far as Lawrence goes. And he can go no farther except in that limbo where sex and love are desperately confused. He cannot separate his spirit from his loins; he is, at the same time, mentally detached and emotionally victimized. His agony grows sharper, his solution vaguer. This, it seems, is the core of Lawrence's *malaise*. There is something about his excitation which is uncomfortably flagellant; his sudden heats and swift revulsions are too neurotic to evoke more than pity; hysteria, in many of the poems, is subdued but not silenced.

But there is something here beyond the sex-fearful, sex-fascinated being; something beyond the self-worshiping, self-deluded artist, and that is Lawrence's intensity. Whatever its faults, the pitch and register of his work is poetry. Impotence itself has power in his propulsive verse. A poet of sensibilities which are refined to the point of being always a little wounded, a recorder of kaleidoscopic images and sensory nuances, Lawrence at forty-four had made a permanent if painful contribution to literature. There are passages in his novels—especially in *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1921)—that have the accent and the sweep of poetry; there are poems that fasten on the mind and will not be

shaken off. It is rather a curious commentary that his objective or "fictional" poems are among his best. Nothing that he has written, none of his verse is more surely projected than the dramatic lyrics in dialect: "A Youth Mowing," "Violets," "Whether or Not," that remarkable sequence which a ruder Browning might have fathered.

Lawrence is more the enmeshed self, less the detached poet in "A Young Wife," "Love on the Farm," "The Wedding Morn," and the irritated fragments in *Pansies* (1929). Here speaks "the hot blood's blindfold art," chaotically, characteristically, but always eloquently.

After a struggle of many years, Lawrence succumbed to tuberculosis. His wish that he be taken to Arizona, either to die or to recuperate, could not be granted and he died March 2, 1930, at Nice, France. Immediately thereafter reappraisals set in: Lawrence was subjected to new examinations as poet, prophet, pamphleteer and, chiefly, as disturber of the cultural peace. Few writers had roused more violent and controversial issues; four of his books had been suppressed, a show of his paintings (an art to which Lawrence turned in his forties) was raided. Though unusually fecund, opposition kindled a bitter flame in him and his creative passion turned to propaganda. *The Psychology of the Unconscious* is a fantastic variation on Jung; *Studies in American Literature* is a poorly proportioned but provocative plea for the recognition of a native spirit; *Pornography and Obscenity* (1929) is a tract, an argument for the appreciation of the realities as against the hypocrisies of sexual morality.

But his polemical writing is, after all, the least of his work. In the best of his novels and poems he achieved a style that was dynamic, inflamed, savagely honest. A conscientious barbarian, he was, as Stuart Sherman wrote, "a revolutionist in favor of an individualistic, aristocratic barbarianism." He seldom wrote badly. True, his preoccupation was sex (he was described as "the novelist of the over- and the under-sexed"); he dealt almost entirely with the intensification or the perversion of the sexual instinct. But his deeper obsession, the "inner theme," was the possession and maintenance of masculine power. One homily was apparent in all his works: The world has gone stale, feebly promiscuous, prettily fetid. Small spurts of lust instead of a long passion; talk instead of acts. The world has ceased to be masculine. Its discontent, like its nervous art, its soft-rotten culture, its middle-class *malaise*, is all the outcome of womanishness. Women, pretending to need us, have used us up; women have destroyed us with merciless softness. All we cherish has become effeminized, vitiated with the white poison of their approval and the black venom of their jealousy. Suffering from a "mind-perverted, will-perverted, ego-

perverted love," the world will be happy only when man—over-civilized man—regains the free power which is the well-spring of emotional virility.

The defect in thinking is obvious. It is not "maleness" which troubles the artist but his consciousness of it. It is this lack of peace which Lawrence instinctively resented and which kept him enslaved to his narrow freedom. Coming up from that lower English world "where the good form and restraint of the public school tradition was a gag to be spat out once the speaker gained the strength of self-confidence," Lawrence, rising by self-improvement, could never resist improving others. In this he was, beneath his libertarian manner, the Puritan. "He came up," said Henry S. Canby, "when the bourgeois Victorian morality was losing its vigor, and he preached his new gospel of virility just as the Methodists preached revivalism to the Anglicans." His methods were extravagant, often exacerbated, but they were vitally his own. He had, above all, the faculty of making the reader revalue his own standards. Whatever status as an artist the future may assign him, there can be no question that he was a force.

## SUSPENSE

The wind comes from the north
Blowing little flocks of birds
Like spray across the town,
And a train roaring forth
Rushes stampeding down
South, with flying curds
Of steam, from the darkening north.

Whither I turn and set
Like a needle steadfastly,
Waiting ever to get
The news that she is free;
But ever fixed, as yet,
To the lode of her agony.

## A YOUTH MOWING

There are four men mowing down by the Isar;
I can hear the swish of the scythe-strokes, four
Sharp breaths taken; yea, and I
Am sorry for what's in store.

The first man out of the four that's mowing
Is mine. I claim him once and for all:
Though it's sorry I am, on his young feet, knowing
None of the trouble he's led to stall.

As he sees me bringing the dinner, he lifts
His head as proud as a deer that looks
Shoulder-deep out of the corn: and wipes
His scythe-blade bright, unhooks

The scythe-stone and over the stubble to me.
Lad, thou hast gotten a child in me,
Laddie, a man thou'lt ha'e to be,
Yea, though I'm sorry for thee.

## A YOUNG WIFE

The pain of loving you
Is almost more than I can bear.

I walk in fear of you
The darkness starts up where
You stand, and the night comes through
Your eyes when you look at me.

Ah, never before did I see
The shadows that live in the sun!

Now every tall glad tree
Turns round its back to the sun
And looks down on the ground, to see
The shadow it used to shun.

At the foot of each glowing thing
A night lies looking up.

Oh, and I want to sing
And dance, but I can't lift up
My eyes from the shadows: dark
They lie spilt round the cup.

What is it?—Hark
The faint fine seethe in the air!

Like the seething sound in a shell!
It is death still seething where
The wild-flower shakes its bell
And the skylark twinkles blue—

The pain of loving you
Is almost more than I can bear.

## CHERRY ROBBERS

Under the long dark boughs, like jewels red
In the hair of an Eastern girl
Hang strings of crimson cherries, as if had bled
Blood-drops beneath each curl.

Under the glistening cherries, with folded wings
Three dead birds lie:
Pale-breasted throstles and a blackbird, robberlings
Stained with red dye.

Against the haystack a girl stands laughing at me,
Cherries hung round her ears.
Offers me her scarlet fruit: I will see
If she has any tears.

## A WINTER'S TALE

Yesterday the fields were only gray with scattered snow,
And now the longest grass-leaves hardly emerge;
Yet her deep footsteps mark the snow, and go
On towards the pines at the hill's white verge.

I cannot see her, since the mist's pale scarf
Obscures the dark wood and the dull orange sky;
But she's waiting, I know, impatient and cold, half
Sobs struggling in to her frosty sigh.

Why does she come so promptly, when she must know
She's only the nearer to the inevitable farewell?
The hill is steep, on the snow my steps are slow—
Why does she come, when she knows what I have to tell?

## LOVE ON THE FARM

What large, dark hands are those at the window
Grasping in the golden light
Which weaves its way through the evening wind
  At my heart's delight?

Ah, only the leaves! But in the west
I see a redness suddenly come
Into the evening's anxious breast—
  'Tis the wound of love goes home!

The woodbine creeps abroad
Calling low to her lover:
  The sun-lit flirt who all the day
  Has poised above her lips in play
  And stolen kisses, shallow and gay
  Of pollen, now has gone away—
    She woos the moth with her sweet, low word;
And when above her his moth-wings hover
Then her bright breast she will uncover
And yield her honey-drop to her lover.

Into the yellow, evening glow
Saunters a man from the farm below;
Leans, and looks in at the low-built shed
Where the swallow has hung her marriage bed.
  The bird lies warm against the wall.
  She glances quick her startled eyes
  Towards him, then she turns away
  Her small head, making warm display
  Of red upon the throat. Her terrors sway
  Her out of the nest's warm, busy ball,
  Whose plaintive cry is heard as she flies
  In one blue stoop from out the sties
  Into the twilight's empty hall.

Oh, water-hen, beside the rushes,
Hide your quaintly scarlet blushes,
Still your quick tail, lie still as dead,
Till the distance folds over his ominous tread!

The rabbit presses back her ears,
Turns back her liquid, anguished eyes
And crouches low; then with wild spring
Spurts from the terror of his oncoming;
To be choked back, the wire ring
Her frantic effort throttling:
  Piteous brown ball of quivering fears!
Ah, soon in his large, hard hands she dies,
And swings all loose from the swing of his walk!
Yet calm and kindly are his eyes
And ready to open in brown surprise
Should I not answer to his talk
Or should he my tears surmise.

I hear his hand on the latch, and rise from my chair
Watching the door open; he flashes bare
His strong teeth in a smile, and flashes his eyes
In a smile like triumph upon me; then careless-wise
He flings the rabbit soft on the table board
And comes toward me: he! the uplifted sword
Of his hand against my bosom! and oh, the broad
Blade of his glance that asks me to applaud
His coming! With his hand he turns my face to him
And caresses me with his fingers that still smell grim
Of rabbit's fur! God, I am caught in a snare!
I know not what fine wire is round my throat;
I only know I let him finger there
My pulse of life, and let him nose like a stoat
Who sniffs with joy before he drinks the blood.

And down his mouth comes to my mouth! and down
His bright dark eyes come over me, like a hood
Upon my mind! his lips meet mine, and a flood
Of sweet fire sweeps across me, so I drown
Against him, die, and find death good.

## PIANO

Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the tingling strings
And pressing the small, poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song
Betrays me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter outside
And hymns in the cozy parlor, the tinkling piano our guide.

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamor
With the great black piano appassionato. The glamour
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the past.

## GREEN

The dawn was apple-green,
The sky was green wine held up in the sun,
The moon was a golden petal between.

She opened her eyes, and green
They shone, clear like flowers undone
For the first time, now for the first time seen.

## A WHITE BLOSSOM

A tiny moon as small and white as a single jasmine flower
Leans all alone above my window, on night's wintry bower,
Liquid as lime-tree blossom, soft as brilliant water or rain
She shines, the first white love of my youth, passionless and in vain.

## WEDDING MORN

The morning breaks like a pomegranate
In a shining crack of red;
Ah, when tomorrow the dawn comes late
Whitening across the bed

It will find me at the marriage gate
And waiting while light is shed
On him who is sleeping satiate
With a sunk, unconscious head.

And when the dawn comes creeping in,
Cautiously I shall raise
Myself to watch the daylight win
On my first day of days,
As it shows him sleeping a sleep he got
With me, as under my gaze
He grows distinct, and I see his hot
Face freed of the wavering blaze.

Then I shall know which image of God
My man is made toward;
And I shall see my sleeping rod
Or my life's reward;
And I shall count the stamp and worth
Of the man I've accepted as mine,
Shall see an image of heaven or of earth
On his minted metal shine.

Oh, and I long to see him sleep
In my power utterly;
So I shall know what I have to keep. . . .
I long to see
My love, that spinning coin, laid still
And plain at the side of me
For me to reckon—for surely he will
Be wealth of life to me.

And then he will be mine, he will lie
Revealed to me;
Patent and open beneath my eye
He will sleep of me;
He will lie negligent, resign
His truth to me, and I
Shall watch the dawn light up for me
This fate of mine.

And as I watch the wan light shine
On his sleep that is filled of me,
On his brow where the curved wisps clot and twine
Carelessly,
On his lips where the light breaths come and go
Unconsciously,
On his limbs in sleep at last laid low
Helplessly,
I shall weep, oh, I shall weep, I know
For joy or for misery.

## WHETHER OR NOT

### I

Dunna thee tell me it's his'n, mother,
Dunna thee, dunna thee!
—Oh, aye, he'll come an' tell thee his-sèn,[1]
Wench, wunna he?

Tha doesna mean ter say ter me, mother,
He's gone wi' that—
—My gel, owt'll do for a man i' th' dark;
Tha's got it flat!

But 'er's old, mother, 'er's twenty year
Older nor him—
—Aye, an' yaller as a crowflower; an' yet i' th' dark
Er'd do for Tim.

Tha niver believes it, does ter, mother?
It's somebody's lies.
—Ax 'im thy-sèn, wench; a widder's lodger!
It's no surprise.

### II

A widow o' forty-five
Wi' a bitter, dirty skin,
To ha' 'ticed a lad o' twenty-five,
An' 'im to 'ave been took in!

[1] His-sèn = himself.

A widow o' forty-five
As 'as sludged like a horse all 'er life
Till 'er's tough as whit-leather, to slive [1]
Atween a lad an' 'is wife!

A widow o' forty-five!
A glum old otchel, wi' long
Witch teeth, an' 'er hawk-eyes, as I've
Mistrusted all along!

An' me as 'as kept my-sèn
Shut like a daisy bud,
Clean an' new an' nice, so's when
He wed he'd ha'e summat good!

An' 'im as nice an' fresh
As any man i' th' force,
To ha' gone an' given his clean young flesh
To a woman that coarse!

III

You're stout to brave this snow, Miss Stainwright,
Are you makin' Brinsley way?
—I'm off up th' line to Underwood
Wi' a dress as is wanted today.

Oh, are you goin' to Underwood?
'Appen then you've 'eered!
—What's that as 'appen I've 'eered on, Missis?
Speak up, you nedn't be feared.

Why, your young man an' Widow Naylor,
'Er as 'e lodges wi'!
They say he's got 'er wi' childt; but there—
It's nothing to do wi' me!

Though if it's true, they'll turn 'im out
O' th' p'lice force, without fail;
An' if it's *not* true, you may back your life
They'll listen to *her* tale.

[1] To slive = to slip, to interfere.

—Well, I'm believin' no tale, Missis,
I'm seein' for my-sèn.
An' when I know for sure, Missis,
I'll talk *then.*

IV

Nay, robin red-breast, tha needna
Sit noddin' thy head at me!
My breast's as red as thine, I reckon,
Flayed red, if tha could but see.

Nay, yo' blessed pee-whips,
Yo' needna scraight [1] at me!
I'm scraightin' my-sèn but arena goin'
Ter let iv'rybody see.

Tha *art* smock-raveled, bunny,
Larropin' neck and crop
I' th' snow! but I's warrant thee
*I'm* further ower th' top.

V

Now sithee theer at th' reelroad crossin'
Warmin' 'is-sèn at the stool o' fire
Under the tank as fills th' ingines,
If there isn't my dearly-beloved liar!

My constable, wi' 'is buttoned breast
As stout as the truth, my Sirs! an' 'is face
As bold as a robin! It's much he cares
For this nice old shame an' disgrace.

Oh, but 'e drops 'is flag when 'e sees me!
Yi, an' 'is face goes white! Oh, yes,
Tha can stare at me wi' thy fierce blue eyes;
Tha won't stare me out, I guess.

[1] Scraight = cry.

VI

Whativer brings thee out so far
In a' this depth o' snow?
—I'm takin' 'ome a weddin'-dress,
If yer mun know.

Why, is there a weddin' at Underwood
As tha ne'd trudge up 'ere?
—It's Widder Naylor's weddin'-dress,
'Er'll be wantin' it, I 'ear.

'Er doesna want no weddin'-dress—
—Why—? but what dost mean?
—Doesn't ter know what I mean, Timmy?
Yi, tha must ha' bin 'ard ter wean!

Tha'rt a good-un at suckin'-in yet, Timmy!
But tell me, isn't it true
As 'er'll be wantin' my weddin'-dress
In a wik or two?

—Tha's no 'casions ter ha'e me on,
Lizzie; what's done is done.
—*Done*, I should think so! An' might I ask
When tha begun?

It's thee as 'as done it, as much as me,
So there, an' I tell thee flat.
—Me gotten a childt ter thy landlady?
—Tha's gotten thy answer pat.

As tha allus 'ast; but let me tell thee
Hasna ter sent me whoam, when I
Was a'most burstin' mad o' my-sèn,
An' walkin' in agony?

After I'd kissed thee at night, Lizzie,
An' tha's laid against me, an' melted
Into me, melted right into me, Lizzie,
Till I was verily swelted.

An' if my landlady seed me like it,
An' if 'er clawkin' eyes
Went through me as the light went out,
Is it any cause for surprise?

—No cause for surprise at all, my lad;
After kissin' an' cuddlin' wi' me, tha could
Turn thy mouth on a woman like that!
I hope it did thee good.

—Aye, it did; but afterwards
I could ha' killed 'er.
—Afterwards! how many times afterwards
Could ter ha' killed 'er?

Say no more, Liz, dunna thee;
'Er's as good as thee.
—Then I'll say good-by to thee, Timothy;
Take 'er i'stead o' me.

I'll ta'e thy word good-by, Liz,
Though I shonna marry 'er.
Nor 'er nor nub'dy.—It is
Very brave of you, Sir!

—T' childt maun ta'e its luck, it mun,
An' 'er maun ta'e *'er* luck.
F'r I tell yer I h'arena marryin' none
On yer; yo'n got what yer took!

—That's spoken like a man, Timmy,
That's spoken like a man!
"'E up an' fired 'is pistol,
An' then away 'e ran!"

—I damn well shanna marry 'er,
Nor yo', so chew it no more!
I'll chuck the flamin' lot o' you—
—Yer nedn't 'ave swore!

VII

There's 'is collar round th' candlestick,
An' there's the dark-blue tie I bought 'im!
An' these is the woman's kids 'es's so fond on,
An' 'ere comes the cat as caught 'im!

I dunno wheer 'is eyes was—a gret
Round-shouldered hag! My Sirs, to think
Of 'im stoopin' to 'er! You'd wonder 'e could
Throw 'imself down *that* sink!

I expect yer know who I am, Mrs. Naylor?
  Who y'are? yis, you're Lizzie Stainwright.
An' 'appen you'd guess then what I've come for?
  —'Appen I mightn't, 'appen I might.

Yer knowed as I was courtin' Tim Merfin?
  —Yis, I knowed 'e wor courtin' thee.
An' yet yer've bin carryin' on wi' 'im!
  —Aye, an' 'im wi' me.

Well, now yer've got ter pay for it.
  —If I han, what's that ter thee?
'E isn't goin' ter marry yer.
  —Tha wants 'im thy-sèn, I see.

It 'asn't nothin' to do with me.
  —Then what art colleyfoglin' for?
*I'm* not 'avin' your orts an' slarts.
  —Which on us said you wor?

But I want you to know 'e's not *marryin'* you.
  —Tha wants 'im thy-sèn too bad.
Though I'll see as 'e pays you, an' does what's right.
  —Tha'rt for doin' a lot wi' t' lad!

VIII

Ta'e off thy duty stripes, Tim,
  An' come in 'ere wi' me;
Ta'e off thy p'liceman's helmet
  An' look at me.

I wish tha hadna done it, Tim,
I do, an' that I do!
For whenever I look thee i' th' face, I's'll see
Her face too.

I wish I could wesh 'er off'n thee;
'Appen I can, if I try.
But tha'll ha'e ter promise ter be true ter me
Till I die. . . .

IX

Twenty pounds o' thy own tha hast, an' fifty pound ha'e I;
Thine shall go ter pay the woman, an' wi' my bit we'll buy
All as we s'll want for furniture when tha leaves this place;
An' we'll be married at th' registrar—now lift thy face.

Lift thy face an' look at me, man! canna ter look at me?
Sorry I am for this business, an' sorry if ever I've driven thee
To do such a thing; though it's a poor tale, it is, that I'm bound to say,
Afore I can ta'e thee I've got a widder o' forty-five ter pay!

Dunna thee think but what I've loved thee; I've loved thee too well.
An' 'deed an' I wish as this tale o' thine wor niver my tale to tell!
Deed an' I wish I c'd 'a' stood at th' altar wi' thee an' bin proud o' thee!
That I could 'a' bin first woman ter thee, as thar'rt first man ter me!

But we maun ma'e the best on't. So now rouse up an' look at me.
Look up an' say tha'rt sorry tha did it; say tha'rt sorry for me.
They'll turn thee out o' th' force, I doubt me; if they do, we can see
If my father can get thee a job on t'bank. Say tha'rt sorry, Timmy!

X

Aye, I'm sorry, I'm sorry,
  But what o' that!
Aye, I'm sorry! Tha needna worry
  Nor fret thy fat.

I'm sorry for thee, I'm sorry f'r 'er,
  I'm sorry f'r us a'.
But what then? Tha wants me, does ter
  After a'?

Ah'n put my-sĕn i' th' wrong, Liz,
  An' 'er as well.
An' tha'rt that right, tha knows; 'tis
  Other folks in hell.

Tha *art* so sure tha'rt right, Liz!
  That damned sure!
But 'ark thee 'ere, that widder woman
  's less graspin', if 'er's poor.

What 'er gen, 'er gen me
  Beout a thought.
'Er gen me summat; I shanna
  Say it wor nought.

I'm sorry for th' trouble, aye
  As comes on us a'.
But sorry for what I had? why
  I'm not, that's a'.

As for marryin', I shanna marry
  Neither on yer.
Ah've 'ad a' as I can carry
  From you an' from 'er.

So I's'll go an' leave yer,
  Both on yer,
I don't like yer, Liz, I want ter
  Get away from yer.

An' I don't really like 'er neither,
Even though I've 'ad
More from 'er than from you; but either
Of yer's too much for this lad.

Let me go! what's good o' talkin'?
Let's a' ha' done.
Talk about love o' women!
Ter me it's no fun.

I'll say good-by, Liz, to yer,
Yer too much i' th' right for me.
An' wi' 'er somehow it isn't right.
So good-by, an' let's let be!

### AWARE

Slowly the moon is rising out of the ruddy haze,
Divesting herself of her golden shift, and so
Emerging white and exquisite; and I in amaze
See in the sky before me, a woman I did not know
I loved, but there she goes, and her beauty hurts my heart;
I follow her down the night, begging her not to depart.

## F. S. FLINT

F(rancis) S(tewart) Flint was born in 1885 and, besides being a poet, is known as a skillful translator from the French and a valuable secretary in the Ministry of Labor. He was one of the first to form the Imagist group and his "History of Imagism," in *The Egoist* (May, 1915) shows that the movement had a much earlier origin than is commonly supposed. His youth was spent in a struggle to maintain existence. As he wrote in the Introduction to *Otherworld*, "I am not a scholar in any sense; the chance of life has made me a wage-earner since I could read and write almost—so that when I invented the term 'unrhymed cadence' I was not aware that I was in the oldest of traditions, that Chaucer had spoken of it in his *House of Fame* or that Cynewulf had sung:

> Many varied voices voice I through my mouth.
> Cunning are the notes I sing, and incessantly I change them.
> Clear I cry and loud with the chant within my head;
> Holding to my tones, hiding not their sweetness,
> . . . when I burst forth with a cadenced song."

Flint himself was one of the most accomplished of the Imagist poets. His first volume, *In the Net of the Stars* (1909) anticipates the later experiments although most of it is formal in structure and is like its title, influenced by Yeats. Ford Madox Ford (at that time Ford Madox Hueffer) was quick to appreciate Flint's gift and printed his work in *The English Review. Cadences* appeared in 1915, *Otherworld* in 1920, the latter volume beginning with this statement: "There is only one art of writing and that is the art of poetry; and wherever you feel the warmth of human experience and imagination in any writing, there is poetry—whether it is in the form we call prose, or in rhyme and meter, or in the unrhymed cadence in which the greater part of this book is written."

Apart from his form, which is usually successful in registering racial memories, Flint's philosophy is apparent beneath a not so obvious music.

It is regrettable that Flint has not pursued poetry, having discontinued it with *Otherworld.* Since 1920 he has busied himself with translating the works of modern French poets and essayists, especially Verhaeren and Jean de Bosschere.

### LONDON

London, my beautiful,
it is not the sunset
nor the pale green sky
shimmering through the curtain
of the silver birch,
nor the quietness;
it is not the hopping
of birds
upon the lawn,
nor the darkness
stealing over all things
that moves me.

But as the moon creeps slowly
over the tree-tops
among the stars,
I think of her
and the glow her passing
sheds on men.

London, my beautiful,
I will climb
into the branches
to the moonlit tree-tops,
that my blood may be cooled
by the wind.

## PLANE-TREE

O tardy plane-tree
Was not the winter long enough?
The April sun
Has sprayed with green
The gray house behind the boughs
And burst the first lit
Golden lamps of the chestnut:
Its leaves fall limply
Away from the brown flower-buds;
He has dressed in pink
The black and naked almond-tree,
Bestrewn the pavement with red-tipped catkins,
And sent the sparrows to find
His pouting buds on every twig,
Excepting yours, O motley plane-tree,
Whom the motor-cars,
In scorn of your laziness,
Spurn with their dust.

## SADNESS

Spirit in me,
why are you so sad?
Is it that men are still but men
and know no other way?

Over the hills
go and find the golden-garlanded trees. . . .
Autumn has come. . . .
In the soft sadness of her mists,
you may discover

a memory of the joys
of summer past,
and there forget
what men are,
and think
what men may be.

## CHRYSANTHEMUMS

O golden-red and tall chrysanthemums,
you are the graceful soul of the china vase
wherein you stand
amid your leaves.

O quiet room,
you are the symbol of my patient heart.

O flowers of flame, O tall chrysanthemums,
my love who comes
will wave wide ripples of disquiet there,
and a great tide of the eternal sea
will rise at her approach,
and surge to song.

O quiet room, O flame chrysanthemums,
images of my heart and its proud love,
you have no presage of the power that comes
to fill with anguish the essential calm.

O calm wrought face, O sphinx behind the door,
her hand is on the latch.

## BEGGAR

In the gutter
piping his sadness
an old man stands,
bent and shriveled,
beard draggled,
eyes dead.

Huddled and mean,
shivering in threadbare clothes—
winds beat him,
hunger bites him,
forlorn, a whistle in his hands,
piping.

Hark! the strange quality
of his sorrowful music,
wind from an empty belly
wrought magically
into the wind,—

pattern of silver on bronze.

## THOMAS BURKE

Thomas Burke was born in London where, after a difficult childhood, he was self-educated. His early experiences are thinly disguised in *The Wind and the Rain.*

Burke is chiefly known as a writer of prose; his graphic *Limehouse Nights* being the most popular of his short stories, almost starting a fashion in slum-Chinese dock-side cinemas. *The Song Book of Quong Lee* is equally successful.

Burke's more sensitive side is displayed in the privately printed *Verses* and the autobiographical *The Wind and the Rain.*

### PADDINGTON

Deep in a dusk of lilac the station lies,
  Vasty and echo-haunted and fiercely made;
Speared all about with suns where the arches rise,
  Leaping on lusty limbs over pools of shade.
Oh, lovely are her lean lines and lovely her poise,
Empanoplying the long, dim frenzy of noise.

But her most beauty she holds until the night,
  Even as love, until the brute day is ended,
When all her thousand eyes in a tempest of light
  Shatter cathedral gloom, and show her splendid.
Splendid we know her, and ever splendid she stands;
Clean from the splendid sweat of human hands.

Gerald Gould was born in 1885 at Scarborough, was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, and was Fellow of Merton College from 1906 to 1916. Journalist as well as author, he was associate editor of *The Daily Herald* from 1919 to 1921 and literary editor of *The Saturday Review* from 1922 to 1926.

Gould began as a poet and, although he is the author of half a dozen essays and sketches, remains a poet. Of his eight books of verse, the most interesting are *The Happy Tree* (1919), *The Journey* (1920) and *Beauty, the Pilgrim* (1927). Extremely versatile, his smoothly running lines rarely descend to mere facility; a dignity of spirit underlies even the least pretentious of Gould's lyrics.

A comprehensive *Collected Poems* was published simultaneously in America and England in 1929.

## SONG

She whom I love will sit apart,
And they whom love makes wise
May know the beauty in her heart
By the beauty in her eyes.

Thoughts that in quietness confute
The noisy world are hers,
Like music in a listening lute
Whose strings no finger stirs.

And in her eyes the shadows move,
Not glad nor sad, but strange
With those unchanging dreams that prove
The littleness of change.

## MORTALITY

In the green quiet wood, where I was used,
In summer, to a welcome calm and dark,
I found the threat of murder introduced
By scars of white paint on the wrinkled bark.

How few old friends were to be spared! And now
I see my friends with new eyes here in town
—Men as trees walking, and on every brow
A pallid scar, and all to be cut down.

## TWILIGHT

The fields grow dim; the somber mills
Stand crucified against the skies;
Blue in the distance rise
The ancient hills.

The stars come softly, and the least
Last wind is dead as dead desires;
A swarm of silver spires
Fades in the East.

The heavy thoughts that dwelt with me
Slip from me soundless, as the dead
Sink to their quiet bed
Far out at sea.

The stars are empty of concern,
The earth is empty of unrest;
Almost the burning West
Has ceased to burn.

Gray rivers and gray roads, and dells
Having the darkness at their heart;
From valleys, far apart,
The noise of bells.

## THE HAPPY TREE

There was a bright and happy tree;
  The wind with music laced its boughs;
Thither across the houseless sea
  Came singing birds to house.

Men grudged the tree its happy eves,
  Its happy dawns of eager sound;
So that all crown and tower of leaves
  They leveled with the ground.

They made an upright of the stem,
  A cross-piece of a bough they made:
No shadow of their deed on them
  The fallen branches laid.

But blithely, since the year was young,
When they a fitting hill did find,
There on the happy tree they hung
The Saviour of mankind.

## HUMBERT WOLFE

Humbert Wolfe was born at Milan in Italy, January 5, 1885. As he himself declared, he "lost no time in crossing to Bradford in the West Riding of Yorkshire, which town he reached during the same year and remained there till he left it for Oxford some 18 years later. Wrote sporadic and increasingly unsatisfactory verse from the age of 16 till his appointment to the British Civil Service in 1909. This appointment naturally induced in him a more restrained outlook upon life and, beyond a few casual poems and a rejected novel, he had no literary output or recognition till after the War in 1919. In that year, he published *London Sonnets,* followed in the next year by *Shylock Reasons with Mr. Chesterton.* In 1923, he published *Circular Saws,* a collection of ambiguous aphorisms, and, in 1924, *Kensington Gardens,* a collection of short poems dealing with that delectable locality. It is to be anticipated (and feared) that his output will tend rapidly to increase."

This was in 1924. Between that year and 1930 Wolfe published some eleven volumes all, with one exception, in verse. The outstanding quality is neither the dexterous satire which Wolfe uses so incisively nor the grace and charm of which he is somewhat too fond, but a confusion of the two. The surface characteristics are modern, but modern only in certain tricks of typography and employment of "slant" or "suspended" rhymes. There is, above all, a quaintly individualized fancy that delights to improvise on major themes which somehow slide into minor cadences. It is this contradiction which marks even the most definite of his volumes, an indetermination from which Wolfe seems unable to escape. It is as if the pale musicianer of whom he speaks had composed a robust theme—and arranged it as a duet for dulcimer and *viola d'amore.*

Thus the poet cannot make up his mind whether to thrust sentimentally or sigh sardonically; whether to be a mimic Heine or a tragic Pierrot; whether to be the last of an old tradition of lyricists or the first of a new generation of ironists. As a result, he is all of these in quick succession, often, indeed, at the same time. *Humoresque* (1926), the least remarkable poetically, is the most rewarding as a study of this paradoxical ambidexterity. *The Unknown Goddess* (1925) wavers between earnestness and artificiality; "Iliad," as memorable a set of stanzas about poetry ever writ-

ten, is followed by half a dozen fragilities composed of whipped cream and a spun-sugar *Weltschmerz*. In *News of the Devil* (1926) the barb of satire speeds with a savage purpose. *Cursory Rhymes* (1927), on the other hand, is a collection of verses to and for children in which the author begins by being unsure of his audience and ends by being unsure of himself; the note of naïveté seems forced, the archness calculated, the humor tricky and bookish. *This Blind Rose* (1929) again contains Wolfe's not quite detached irony, his bitter-sweet overtones, the faint artificiality of language which keeps it from being either rhetorical or realistic.

Wolfe's two best volumes up to 1930 are the early *Kensington Gardens* (1924) and the larger *Requiem* (1927). In their very differences they are this poet, flower and essence, all compact. In the first, his fantasies enchant not only with their delicacy but with their inherent truth. The squirrel "like a small gray coffee-pot," the half-metal tulip "clean as a lady, cool as glass," the city financier with his "table-land of shiny hat," the "flushed example" of the rose with her "dazzling inch of scent"—all these are seen, felt and communicated in such a way that the reader thrills with that emotion which is at the base of all enjoyment, the mingling of recognition and surprise. *Requiem* is the most reflective of all Wolfe's work and the nearest to a metaphysical synthesis. This symphonic and almost fugal creation retains Wolfe's exactitude of epithet embodied in a graver music whose pattern cannot be so easily defined. It is, in spite of small lapses, a major effort. *Others Abide* (1927) shows Wolfe as the happy translator of many verses from The Greek Anthology, a task for which his nimble technique was exactly fitted. James Stephens wrote, "It may reasonably be said that his version supersedes all others."

Although he is undoubtedly too prolific and his work suffers from a repetition of effects, Wolfe is always the poet in his glamorous use of language and his reaction to the nuances of his subject whatever it may be.

### TULIP

Clean as a lady,
cool as glass,
fresh without fragrance
the tulip was.

The craftsman, who carved her
of metal, prayed:
"Live, oh thou lovely!"
Half metal she stayed.

## THRUSHES

The City Financier
walks in the gardens,
stiffly, because of
his pride and his burdens.

The daisies, looking
up, observe
only a self-
respecting curve.

The thrushes only
see a flat
table-land
of shiny hat.

He looks importantly
about him,
while all the spring
goes on without him.

## THE GRAY SQUIRREL

Like a small gray
coffee-pot,
sits the squirrel.
He is not

all he should be,
kills by dozens
trees, and eats
his red-brown cousins.

The keeper, on the
other hand
, who shot him, is
a Christian, and

loves his enemies,
which shows
the squirrel was not
one of those.

## LAMB

The old bellwether
looked at the lamb,
as a gentleman looks
when he mutters "Damn!"

"If you jump and frisk,
you little fool,
you'll only end
by losing your wool.

"When I was a lamb
I always would
behave as like a sheep
as I could."

"Did you!" the lamb
replied with a leap,
"I always thought
you were born a sheep."

The park-keeper said
to the boy on the fence
"Let's have less
of your impudence!

"Off with you now,
and do as you're bade,
or you'll end in prison.
When I was a lad . . ."

## THE LILAC

Who thought of the lilac?
"I," dew said,
"I made up the lilac
out of my head."

"She made up the lilac!
Pooh!" thrilled a linnet,
and each dew-note had a
lilac in it.

## THE ROSE

Why should a man
, though six foot tall,
think he matters
at all, at all?

and, though he live
for seventy years,
does he suppose that
any one cares?

Rather let me
to him propose
the flushed example
of the rose,

who, with her dazzling
inch of scent,
a summer's day
weighs imminent

upon the spirit
entranced, and goes
richer with that
than he with those.

## LABURNUM

Laburnum hangs
her golden fleece
through a thousand
lattices.

In the silken
flosses caught
struggles Spring,
the Argonaut.

## THINGS LOVELIER

You cannot dream
Things lovelier

Than the first love
I had of her.

Nor air is any
By magic shaken
As her first breath in
The first kiss taken.

And who, in dreaming,
Understands
Her hands stretched like
A blind man's hands?

Open, trembling,
Wise they were—
You cannot dream
Things lovelier.

## GREEN CANDLES

"There's some one at the door," said gold candlestick:
"Let her in quick, let her in quick!"
"There is a small hand groping at the handle.
Why don't you turn it?" asked green candle.

"Don't go, don't go," said the Heppelwhite chair,
"Lest you find a strange lady there."
"Yes, stay where you are," whispered the white wall:
"There is nobody there at all."

"I know her little foot," gray carpet said:
"Who but I should know her light tread?"
"She shall come in," answered the open door,
"And not," said the room, "go out any more."

## QUEEN VICTORIA

Queen Victoria's
statue is
the work of her
daughter Beatrice.

The shape's all wrong,
and the crown don't fit,
but—bless her old heart!
she was proud of it.

## LOVE IS A KEEPER OF SWANS

Love is a keeper of swans!
Helen! amid what dark wherries
are you steering the silver boat,
that for all the love of Paris,
and his lips against your throat,
passed out of Troy with windless vans?

And, fairest of Italians,
where do you glimmer, Beatrice?
What light of heaven stains your wings
with gold that were all fleur de lys?
And do you hear when Dante sings?
"Love is a keeper of swans."

Love is a keeper of swans.
Have you left the barren plain,
and stormed a gold-eagle's eyrie?
Queen-swan of the eagle strain,
what mountain has you, Mary?
And is its name, as ever, still romance?

And you, bright cynet of immortal Hans,
you need not join your sisters yet.
You have all time. Why should you hasten?
What though the lake with reeds be set,
one reed is murmuring, oh, listen!
"Love is a keeper of swans."

## MAN

The feathers in a fan
are not so frail as man;
the green embossèd leaf
than man is no more brief.
His life is not so loud
as the passing of a cloud;

his death is quieter
than harebells when they stir.
The years that have no form
and substance are as warm,
and space has hardly less
supreme an emptiness.
And yet man being frail
does on himself prevail,
and with a single thought
can bring the world to naught,
as being brief he still
bends to his fleeting will
all time and makes of it
the shadow of his wit.
Soundless in life and death
although he vanisheth,
the echo of a song
makes all the stars a gong.
Cold, void, and yet the grim
darkness is hot with him,
and space is but the span
of the long love of man.

## THE WATERS OF LIFE

When, hardly moving, you decorate night's hush
with the slim pencil of your grace, retrieving
the clean flat stroke of some old Grecian brush
that painted dancers fair beyond believing;

when, leaning back the harvest of your hair
under the moon with beauty as still as hers,
your body's wonder writes upon the air
the perfect cadence of consummate verse,

I think, if this upon the air be shaken,
brief as a falling blossom, it can but be
that Time records, by beauty overtaken,
in one gold instant, immortality,

and that the patterns you weave upon the night
have such swift passion, such essential heat,
that all the painter sees, the poet can write,
are but pale shadows of your dancing feet.

## ILIAD

False dreams, all false,
mad heart, were yours.
The word, and nought else,
in time endures.
Not you long after,
perished and mute,
will last, but the defter
viol and lute.
Sweetly they'll trouble
the listeners
with the cold dropped pebble
of painless verse.
Not you will be offered,
but the poet's false pain.
You have loved and suffered,
mad heart, in vain.
What love doth Helen
or Paris have
where they lie still in
a nameless grave?
Her beauty's a wraith,
and the boy Paris
muffles in death
his mouth's cold cherries.
Yes! these are less,
that were love's summer,
than one gold phrase
of old blind Homer.
Not Helen's wonder
nor Paris stirs,
but the bright, untender
hexameters.
And thus, all passion
is nothing made,
but a star to flash in
an Iliad.
Mad heart, you were wrong!
No love of yours,
but only what's sung,
when love's over, endures.

Shane Leslie, the most distinguished son of Sir John Leslie, was born at Swan Park, Monaghan, Ireland, in 1885, and was educated at Eton, the University of Paris and King's College, Cambridge. He worked for a time among the Irish poor and was interested in the Celtic revival. During the greater part of a year he lectured in the United States, marrying an American, Marjorie Ide.

Leslie has been editor of *The Dublin Review* since 1916. He is the author of several volumes on Irish political matters, as well as *The End of a Chapter* (revised in 1917) and *Verses in Peace and War* (1916). Since 1922 Leslie has devoted himself to novels and biographies, the best of the latter being *George the Fourth* (1926) and *The Skull of Swift* (1928). The chief characteristics of his verse are an imaginative sweep and (as in "The Pater of the Cannon") a grimly ironic twist.

## FLEET STREET

I never see the newsboys run
  Amid the whirling street,
  With swift untiring feet,
To cry the latest venture done,
But I expect one day to hear
  Them cry the crack of doom
  And risings from the tomb,
With great Archangel Michael near;
And see them running from the Fleet
  As messengers of God,
  With Heaven's tidings shod
About their brave unwearied feet.

## THE PATER OF THE CANNON

Father of the thunder,
  Flinger of the flame,
Searing stars asunder,
  *Hallowed be Thy Name!*

By the sweet-sung quiring
  Sister bullets hum,
By our fiercest firing,
  *May Thy Kingdom come!*

By Thy strong apostle
Of the Maxim gun,
By his pentecostal
Flame, *Thy Will be done!*

Give us, Lord, good feeding
To Thy battles sped—
Flesh, white grained and bleeding,
*Give for daily bread!*

## FRANCES CORNFORD

Frances (Darwin) Cornford, daughter of Sir Francis Darwin, the third son of Charles Darwin, was born in 1886 at Cambridge. She married Francis Macdonald Cornford, Fellow and Lecturer of Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1909.

Her first volume, *Poems* (1910), though unaffected, showed little trace of individuality. With *Spring Morning* (1915) a much more distinct personality expressed itself. Hers is a firmly realized, clean-edged verse; a clarity of utterance which is also found in the more suggestive *Autumn Midnight* (1923). Her later verse in *Different Days* (1928) is no less spontaneous than the simple "A Wasted Day," the acute and onomatopoetic "The Watch," and the delightfully mocking triolet "To a Fat Lady Seen from the Train." It is, however, more measured; gravity has been added without the loss of charm. Whether grave or mocking Mrs. Cornford's tone maintains a quiet distinction.

### THE COUNTRY BEDROOM

My room's a square and candle-lighted boat,
In the surrounding depths of night afloat.
My windows are the portholes, and the seas
The sound of rain on the dark apple-trees.

Sea monster-like beneath, an old horse blows
A snort of darkness from his sleeping nose,
Below, among drowned daisies. Far off, hark!
Far off, one owl amidst the waves of dark.

## TO A FAT LADY SEEN FROM THE TRAIN

O why do you walk through the fields in gloves,
  Missing so much and so much?
O fat white woman whom nobody loves,
Why do you walk through the fields in gloves,
When the grass is soft as the breast of doves
  And shivering sweet to the touch?
O why do you walk through the fields in gloves,
  Missing so much and so much?

## THE WATCH

I wakened on my hot, hard bed;
Upon the pillow lay my head;
Beneath the pillow I could hear
My little watch was ticking clear.
I thought the throbbing of it went
Like my continual discontent;
I thought it said in every tick:
I am so sick, so sick, so sick;
O death, come quick, come quick, come quick,
Come quick, come quick, come quick, come quick. . . .

## A WASTED DAY

I spoiled the day;
  Hotly, in haste
All the calm hours
  I gashed and defaced.

Let me forget,
  Let me embark
—Sleep for my boat—
  And sail through the dark.

Till a new day
  Heaven shall send,
Whole as an apple,
  Kind as a friend.

## THE UNBESEECHABLE

(*To be set to music*)

"Time stands still
With gazing on her face,"
Sang Dowland to his lute,
Full of courtly grace.

Now that his musician's face
And her face are dust,
Still I cry, stand still:
Still cry I must.

Stand still, Time,
Hold, hold your pace;
Stiller stand than the smile
On Pharaoh's face.

Stiller than December's frost
That takes the heart with wonder,
Or the pause that comes between
Lightning and thunder.

Time, stand still,
Hush now your tread,
Stiller, stiller than a room
Where lies the sheeted dead.

Where, though it's busy noon,
Naught comes or goes;
Where the tree of endless peace
To the ceiling grows.

O Time, Time—
Stark and full of pain
Why drag me into space,
A dog upon a chain?

I who would float with you,
A ship sailing white,
Who cannot tell which power is hers,
And which the wind's delight.

So my refreshèd soul
  Time would adore,
If for one moment's breath
  Time were no more.

But, with Dowland's broken lute
  And his forgotten rhyme,
Still I cry, Stand still,
  Stand still, Time.

## THE HILLS

Out of the complicated house, come I
To walk beneath the sky.
Here mud and stones and turf, here everything
Is mutely comforting.
Now hung upon the twigs and thorns appear
A host of lovely rain-drops cold and clear.
And on the bank
Or deep in brambly hedges dank
The small birds nip about, and say:
"Brothers, the Spring is not so far away!"
The hills like mother-giantesses old
Lie in the cold,
And with a complete patience, let
The cows come cropping on their bosoms wet,
And even tolerate that such as I
Should wander by
With paltry leathern heel which cannot harm
Their bodies' calm;
And, with a heart they cannot know, to bless
The enormous power of their peacefulness.

## T. E. HULME

T. E. Hulme was born in 1886, and was educated at Cambridge where he distinguished himself in philosophy. Coming to London, he was soon established, becoming the intellectual stimulus if not the leader of a group of writers, painters and thinkers, all of whom paid posthumous tribute to his genius. Entering the War, he was killed in action in 1917.

It is doubtful whether any writer of his generation considered theories of expression more seriously than Hulme. He distrusted the word *per se*, regarding it as a thing with no inner reality. As Herbert Read says, "Against words he opposed the *image* as a unit and the *analogy* as an instrument of thought. Poetry, in the broad sense of imaginative literature, becomes the only kind of logic worthy of consideration, and the art of poetry the only science of meaning. Thought, he argued, was prior to its expression in language, being the simultaneous presentation to the mind of two different images; thought was the recognition of their analogy. The poet is he who can awaken this analogy in the mind of the reader. There can be no question of exact conveyance, because language is a feeble instrument. The poet only suggests, and his suggestion falls flat on a mind that is not in some manner prepared for this sudden fertilization. But suggestion is not produced by 'eye-blur': poetry is a mosaic of exactly defined words, and suggestion must not be related to indefiniteness, but is the most exact conveyance possible of a vivid visual image."

Although Hulme remained a theorist, he carried his ideas concerning a clearer verbal tone into infrequent practice. It was Hulme, aided by Pound, who was responsible for the Imagist movement, and if Hulme's attempts, as Read says, "have remained comparatively obscure because they have not been the vehicle of any momentous intelligence, that does not alter the validity of the ideas or the possibility of their general application." Five of Hulme's image-built poems appeared at the end of Pound's *Ripostes* (1915) gravely entitled "The Complete Poetical Works of T. E. Hulme."

After Hulme's death Herbert Read undertook the labor of deciphering and editing his manuscripts. Most of the material appeared under the title *Speculations* in 1924. A supplementary pamphlet, *Notes on Language and Style*, also collated by Read, was published as one of the University of Washington Chapbooks in 1929.

## AUTUMN

A touch of cold in the Autumn night—
I walked abroad,
And saw the ruddy moon lean over a hedge
Like a red-faced farmer.
I did not speak, but nodded,
And round about were the wistful stars
With white faces like town children.

### CONVERSION

Lighthearted I walked into the valley wood
In the time of hyacinths,
Till beauty like a scented cloth
Cast over, stifled me. I was bound
Motionless and faint of breath
By loveliness that is her own eunuch.

Now pass I to the final river
Ignominiously, in a sack, without sound,
As any peeping Turk to the Bosphorus.

### THE EMBANKMENT

(*The fantasia of a fallen gentleman on a cold, bitter night*)

Once, in finesse of fiddles found I ecstasy,
In the flash of gold heels on the hard pavement.
Now see I
That warmth's the very stuff of poesy.
Oh, God, make small
The old star-eaten blanket of the sky,
That I may fold it round me and in comfort lie.

## SIEGFRIED SASSOON

Siegfried (Loraine) Sassoon was born September 8, 1886. He was educated at Marlborough and Clare College, Cambridge, and, during the War, was a captain in the Royal Welch Fusiliers. He fought three times in France, once in Palestine, winning the Military Cross for bringing in wounded on the battlefield.

Sassoon's literary development seems as contradictory as it is curious. Descended from Persian Jews on his father's side, from a traditional English country family on his mother's, Sassoon's boyhood was spent alternating between fox- and rhyme-hunting. He was divided between a love of rugged activity and a fondness for pale, Dowsonesque lyrics. Several volumes, ranging from parody to the verge of preciosity were issued anonymously and privately printed. A sense of their unreality drove him to a larger work, a poem which, beginning as a burlesque of Masefield, ended in

serious self-expression. With *The Old Huntsman* (1917) Sassoon came into his own idiom, taking his place immediately as "one of England's most brilliant rising stars." The first poem, a pseudo-Masefieldian monologue, was followed by a series of war poems, undisguised in their tragedy and bitterness. Every line of these quivering stanzas bore the mark of a sensitive and outraged nature; there was scarcely a phrase that did not protest against the "glorification" and false glamour of war.

*Counter-Attack* appeared in 1918. In this volume, Sassoon turned from ordered loveliness to the gigantic brutality of war. At heart a lyric idealist, the bloody years intensified and twisted his tenderness till what was stubborn and satiric in him forced its way to the top. In *Counter-Attack* Sassoon found his angry outlet. Most of these poems are choked with passion; many of them are torn out, roots and all, from the very core of an intense conviction. They rush on, not so much because of the poet's art but almost in spite of it. A suave utterance, a neatly-joined structure would be out of place and even inexcusable in poems like "The Rear-Guard," the title-poem, "Base Details," "Does It Matter?"—verses that are composed of love, fever and indignation.

Could Sassoon see nothing uplifting in war? His friend, Robert Nichols, another poet and soldier, speaks for him in a preface. "Let no one ever," Nichols quotes Sassoon as saying, "from henceforth say one word in any way countenancing war. It is dangerous even to speak of how here and there the individual may gain some hardship of soul by it. For war is hell, and those who institute it are criminals. Were there even anything to say for it, it should not be said; for its spiritual disasters far outweigh any of its advantages. . . ." Nichols adds his approval to these sentences, saying, "For myself, this is the truth. War does not ennoble, it degrades."

Early in 1920, Sassoon visited America. At the same time, he brought out his *Picture Show* (1920), a vigorous answer to those who feared that Sassoon had "written himself out" or had begun to burn away in his own fire. Had Rupert Brooke lived, he might have written many of these lacerated but somehow exalted lines. "The Dug-Out" and "Every One Sang" are splendid examples of how much poignance and (in the latter) winged joy can be held in less than a dozen lines. Sassoon's three volumes are the most vital and unsparing records of the war we have had. They synthesize in poetry what Barbusse's *Under Fire* and Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* spread out in panoramic prose or Sheriff's *Journey's End* compacted in his stripped tragedy.

*Recreations*, a privately distributed volume, printed at Christmas, 1923, for his friends, shows Sassoon in a more playfully intel-

lectual vein. Another, even more strictly limited publication, *Lingual Exercises for Advanced Vocabularians*, was issued in 1925. Most of the contents of the two volumes appeared in *Satirical Poems* (1926). Less direct than his deeper notes, these poems display another interesting though not so compelling aspect of Sassoon's genius.

*The Heart's Journey* (1928) seems the work of another poet, but it is the essential Sassoon. Here is the distillation of the post-war years, of silence and sorrow, of long conflict and final unity. Here are the visionary ideals of youth sharpened and purified through pain; here is bitter knowledge saved from bitterness by the spirit of faith; here, in short, Sassoon's Songs of Innocence are mingled with his Songs of Experience. This spiritual autobiography reveals the old fire, but a fire subdued. It has dignity, a gentle ecstasy which places it in the line of great religious poetry. With almost monosyllabic simplicity of word and music, Sassoon shares the power of the mystic; he achieves a sense of identification with all things—be they inanimate objects like a lamp or a book, intangible concepts like music, or his fellowmen, living or dead—fusing every element in a rapt and universal love.

*Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man* (1928), first published anonymously, was awarded the two most coveted literary prizes in England: the Hawthornden Prize and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize in 1929. Here in a prose so straightforward as to seem bare, there is suffused a poetry, void of decoration, independent of diction, but implicit in Sassoon's tenderness and nobility. This volume with the later verse gives us the complete man, the mature and molded poet.

### DREAMERS

Soldiers are citizens of death's gray land,
  Drawing no dividend from time's tomorrows.
In the great hour of destiny they stand,
  Each with his feuds, and jealousies, and sorrows.
Soldiers are sworn to action; they must win
  Some flaming, fatal climax with their lives.
Soldiers are dreamers; when the guns begin
  They think of firelit homes, clean beds, and wives.

I see them in foul dug-outs, gnawed by rats,
  And in the ruined trenches, lashed with rain,

Dreaming of things they did with balls and bats,
And mocked by hopeless longing to regain
Bank-holidays, and picture shows, and spats,
And going to the office in the train.

## THE REAR-GUARD

Groping along the tunnel, step by step,
He winked his prying torch with patching glare
From side to side, and sniffed the unwholesome air.

Tins, boxes, bottles, shapes too vague to know,
A mirror smashed, the mattress from a bed;
And he, exploring fifty feet below
The rosy gloom of battle overhead.
Tripping, he grabbed the wall; saw some one lie
Humped at his feet, half-hidden by a rug,
And stooped to give the sleeper's arm a tug.
"I'm looking for headquarters." No reply.
"God blast your neck!" (For days he'd had no sleep.)
"Get up and guide me through this stinking place."
Savage, he kicked a soft, unanswering heap,
And flashed his beam across the livid face
Terribly glaring up, whose eyes yet wore
Agony dying hard ten days before;
And fists of fingers clutched a blackening wound.
Alone he staggered on until he found
Dawn's ghost that filtered down a shafted stair
To the dazed, muttering creatures underground
Who hear the boom of shells in muffled sound.
At last, with sweat of horror in his hair,
He climbed through darkness to the twilight air,
Unloading hell behind him step by step.

## BASE DETAILS

If I were fierce and bald and short of breath,
I'd live with scarlet Majors at the Base,
And speed glum heroes up the line to death.
You'd see me with my puffy petulant face,

Guzzling and gulping in the best hotel,
Reading the Roll of Honor. "Poor young chap,"
I'd say—"I used to know his father well.
Yes, we've lost heavily in this last scrap."
And when the war is done and youth stone dead,
I'd toddle safely home and die—in bed.

## ATTACK

At dawn the ridge emerges massed and dun
In the wild purple of the glowering sun
Smoldering through spouts of drifting smoke that shroud
The menacing scarred slope; and, one by one,
Tanks creep and topple forward to the wire.
The barrage roars and lifts. Then, clumsily bowed
With bombs and guns and shovels and battle-gear,
Men jostle and climb to meet the bristling fire.
Lines of gray, muttering faces, masked with fear,
They leave their trenches, going over the top,
While time ticks blank and busy on their wrists,
And hope, with furtive eyes and grappling fists,
Flounders in mud. O Jesu, make it stop!

## COUNTER-ATTACK

We'd gained our first objective hours before
While dawn broke like a face with blinking eyes,
Pallid, unshaved and thirsty, blind with smoke.
Things seemed all right at first. We held their line,
With bombers posted, Lewis guns well placed,
And clink of shovels deepening the shallow trench.
The place was rotten with dead; green clumsy legs
High-booted, sprawled and groveled along the saps;
And trunks, face downward in the sucking mud,
Wallowed like trodden sand-bags, loosely filled;
And naked, sodden buttocks, mats of hair,
Bulged, clotted heads, slept in the plastering slime.
And then the rain began—the jolly old rain!

A yawning soldier knelt against the bank,
Staring across the morning blear with fog;

He wondered when the Allemands would get busy;
And then, of course, they started with five-nines
Traversing, sure as fate, and never a dud.
Mute in the clamor of shells he watched them burst
Spouting dark earth and wire with gusts from hell,
While posturing giants dissolved in drifts of smoke.
He crouched and flinched, dizzy with galloping fear,
Sick for escape,—loathing the strangled horror
And butchered, frantic gestures of the dead.

An officer came blundering down the trench:
"Stand-to and man the fire-step!" On he went. . . .
Gasping and bawling, "Fire-step . . . counter-attack!"
Then the haze lifted. Bombing on the right
Down the old sap: machine guns on the left;
And stumbling figures looming out in front.
"O Christ, they're coming at us!" Bullets spat,
And he remembered his rifle . . . rapid fire . . .
And started blazing wildly . . . then a bang
Crumpled and spun him sideways, knocked him out
To grunt and wriggle: none heeded him; he choked
And fought the flapping veils of smothering gloom,
Lost in a blurred confusion of yells and groans. . . .
Down, and down, and down, he sank and drowned,
Bleeding to death. The counter-attack had failed.

## THE DUG-OUT

Why do you lie with your legs ungainly huddled,
And one arm bent across your sullen, cold,
Exhausted face? It hurts my heart to watch you,
Deep-shadowed from the candle's guttering gold;
And you wonder why I shake you by the shoulder;
Drowsy, you mumble and sigh and turn your head. . . .
*You are too young to fall asleep for ever;*
*And when you sleep you remind me of the dead.*

## AFTERMATH

*Have you forgotten yet?* . . .
For the world's events have rumbled on since those gagged days,
Like traffic checked a while at the crossing of city ways:
And the haunted gap in your mind has filled with thoughts that flow
Like clouds in the lit heavens of life; and you're a man reprieved to go,
Taking your peaceful share of Time, with joy to spare.
*But the past is just the same,—and War's a bloody game.* . . .
*Have you forgotten yet?* . . .
*Look down, and swear by the slain of the War that you'll never forget.*

Do you remember the dark months you held the sector at Mametz,—
The nights you watched and wired and dug and piled sandbags on parapets?
Do you remember the rats; and the stench
Of corpses rotting in front of the front-line trench,—
And dawn coming, dirty-white, and chill with a hopeless rain?
Do you ever stop and ask, "Is it all going to happen again?"

Do you remember that hour of din before the attack,—
And the anger, the blind compassion that seized and shook you then
As you peered at the doomed and haggard faces of your men?
Do you remember the stretcher-cases lurching back
With dying eyes and lolling heads, those ashen-gray
Masks of the lads who once were keen and kind and gay?

*Have you forgotten yet?* . . .
*Look up, and swear by the green of the Spring that you'll never forget!*

## EVERY ONE SANG

Every one suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight

As prisoned birds must find in freedom
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark green fields; on; on;
and out of sight.

Every one's voice was suddenly lifted,
And beauty came like the setting sun.
My heart was shaken with tears, and horror
Drifted away. . . . O, but every one
Was a bird; and the song was wordless; the
singing will never be done.

## FALLING ASLEEP

Voices moving about in the quiet house:
Thud of feet and a muffled shutting of doors:
Every one yawning. Only the clocks are alert.

Out in the night there's autumn-smelling gloom
Crowded with whispering trees; across the park
A hollow cry of hounds like lonely bells:
And I know that the clouds are moving across the moon;
The low, red, rising moon. Now herons call
And wrangle by their pool; and hooting owls
Sail from the wood above pale stooks of oats.

Waiting for sleep, I drift from thoughts like these;
And where today was dream-like, build my dreams.
Music . . . there was a bright white room below,
And some one singing a song about a soldier,
One hour, two hours ago: and soon the song
Will be "*last night*": but now the beauty swings
Across my brain, ghost of remembered chords
Which still can make such radiance in my dream
That I can watch the marching of my soldiers,
And count their faces; faces; sunlit faces.

Falling asleep . . . the herons, and the hounds. . . .
September in the darkness; and the world
I've known; all fading past me into peace.

## THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD

The wisdom of the world is this; to say "*There is*
*No other wisdom but to gulp what time can give*" . . .
To guard no inward vision winged wtih mysteries;
To hear no voices haunt the hurrying hours we live;
To keep no faith with ghostly friends; never to know
Vigils of sorrow crowned when loveless passions fade . . .
From wisdom such as this to find my gloom I go,
Companioned by those powers who keep me unafraid.

## CONCLUSION

An image dance of change
Throngs my dim-sighted flesh,
To music's air-built mesh
Move thoughts forever strange.
I am so woven of sense
And subtlety uncharted
That I must vanish hence
Blind-souled and twilight-hearted.

Soon death the hooded lover
Shall touch my house of clay,
And life-lit eyes discover
That in the warbling gray
I have been early waking,
And while the dawn was breaking
Have stolen afield to find
That secrecy which quivers
Beyond the skies and rivers
And cities of the mind.

Till then my thought shall strive
That living I may not lose
The wonder of being alive,
Nor Time's least gift refuse.
For, though the end be night,
This wonder and this white
Astonishment of sight

Make hours of magic shine;
And heaven's a blaze and bloom
Of transience and divine
Inheritance of doom.

## EVERYMAN

The weariness of life that has no will
To climb the steepening hill:
The sickness of the soul for sleep, and to be still.

And then once more the impassioned pygmy fist
Clenched cloudward and defiant;
The pride that would prevail, the doomed protagonist,
Grappling the ghostly giant.

Victim and venturer, turn by turn; and then
Set free to be again
Companion in repose with those who once were men.

## LIMITATIONS

If you could crowd them into forty lines!
Yes; you can do it once you get a start:
All that you want is waiting in your head,
For long ago you've learnt if off by heart.

Begin: your mind's the room where you have slept,
(Don't pause for rhymes), till twilight woke you early.
The window stands wide-open, as it stood
When tree-tops loomed enchanted for a child
Hearing the dawn's first thrushes through the wood
Warbling (you know the words) serene and wild.

You've said it all before: you dreamed of Death,
A dim Apollo in the bird-voiced breeze
That drifts across the morning veiled with showers,
While golden weather shines among dark trees.

You've got your limitations; let them sing,
And all your life will waken with a cry:
Why should you halt when rapture's on the wing
And you've no limit but the cloud-flocked sky? . . .

But some chap shouts, "Here, stop it; that's been done!"
As God might holloa to the rising sun,
And then relent, because the glorying rays
Remind Him of green-glinting Eden days,
And Adam's trustful eyes as he looks up
From carving eagles on his beechwood cup.

Young Adam knew his job; he could condense
Life to an eagle from the unknown immense. . . .
Go on, whoever you are, your lines can be
A whisper in the music from the weirs
Of song that plunge and tumble toward the sea
That is the uncharted mercy of our tears.

. . . . . .

I told you it was easy! . . . Words are fools
Who follow blindly, once they get a lead.
But thoughts are kingfishers that haunt the pools
Of quiet; seldom-seen: and all you need
Is just that flash of joy above your dream.
So, when those forty platitudes are done,
You'll hear a bird-note calling from the stream
That wandered through your childhood; and the sun
Will strike old flaming wonder from the waters. . . .
And there'll be forty lines not yet begun.

## GRANDEUR OF GHOSTS

When I have heard small talk about great men
I climb to bed; light my two candles; then
Consider what was said; and put aside
What Such-a-one remarked and Someone-else replied.

They have spoken lightly of my deathless friends,
(Lamps for my gloom, hands guiding where I stumble,)
Quoting, for shallow conversational ends,
What Shelley shrilled, what Blake once wildly muttered. . . .

How can they use such names and not be humble?
I have sat silent; angry at what they uttered.
The dead bequeathed them life; the dead have said
What these can only memorize and mumble.

### ALONE

"*When I'm alone*"—the words tripped off his tongue
As though to be alone were nothing strange.
"*When I was young*," he said; "*when I was young. . . .*"

I thought of age, and loneliness, and change.
I thought how strange we grow when we're alone,
And how unlike the selves that meet and talk,
And blow the candles out, and say good night.
*Alone. . . .* The word is life endured and known.
It is the stillness where our spirits walk
And all but inmost faith is overthrown.

## RUPERT BROOKE

Possibly the most famous of the younger Georgians, Rupert Brooke was born at Rugby August 3, 1887, his father being assistant master at the school. As a youth, Brooke was fastidious, finicky in dress, but keenly interested in athletics, playing cricket, football, and tennis, swimming as well as most professionals. He was six feet tall, his finely molded head topped with a crown of loose hair of lively brown: "a golden young Apollo," said Edward Thomas. Another friend of his wrote, "To look at, he was part of the youth of the world." His beauty encouraged a naturally romantic disposition; his poems are a blend of delight in the splendor of actuality and disillusion in a loveliness that dies. The shadow of John Donne lies over many of his early and more than a few of his later pages.

The bored elegance, the occasional cynicisms, were purged, when after several years of travel (he had been to Germany, Italy and Honolulu) the war came, turning Brooke away from

> "A world grown old and cold and weary . . .
> And half men, and their dirty songs and dreary,
> And all the little emptiness of love."

Brooke enlisted with a relief that was like a rebirth; he sought new energy in the struggle "where the worst friend and enemy is but Death." After seeing service in Belgium, 1914, he spent the following winter in a training-camp in Dorsetshire and sailed with the British Mediterranean Expeditionary Force in February, 1915, to take part in the unfortunate Dardanelles Campaign.

Brooke never reached his destination. He died of blood-poison

at Skyros in the Aegean, April 23, 1915. His early death was one of England's great literary losses; Lascelles Abercrombie, W. W. Gibson (with both of whom he had been associated on the quarterly, *New Numbers*), Walter de la Mare, Winston Spencer Churchill, and a host of others united to pay tribute to the most brilliant and passionate of the younger poets.

Brooke's sonnet-sequence, *1914* (from which "The Soldier" is taken), appeared with prophetic irony, a few weeks before his death. It contains the accents of immortality. "The Old Vicarage, Grantchester," "Heaven" and "Fish" are characteristic of the lighter and more playful side of Brooke's temperament. The metaphysician, not yet free of Donne, speaks in the mingled fancy and philosophy of "Dining-Room Tea" and "Second Best." Both these phases are combined in "The Great Lover," of which Abercrombie has written, "It is life he loves, and not in any abstract sense, but all the infinite little familiar details of life, remembered and catalogued with delightful zest."

Brooke published only two volumes during his lifetime. After his death, both volumes, with several posthumous poems, were issued as *Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke*, with a Memoir, in 1915. With a few exceptions, when Brooke yielded to the merely clever, his poetry is alert with the sparkle of his personality. It is the self-aware, self-examining mind that rules his emotions; his verse is a triumph of the intellectual imagination. "The theme of his poetry," says Walter de la Mare, "is the life of the mind, the senses, the feelings—life here and now. . . . His world stands out sharp and distinct, like the towers and pinnacles of a city under the light of a sunny sky." Brooke's delight was not in the shadows of revery and meditation, but in the swift play of ideas, in energetic action and reaction.

Thus Brooke was as thorough in his inconsistencies as in his sincerities. Impulse was his god—and his goad. He worshiped glamor and turned from it in revulsion, in a kind of sea- and beauty-sickness; he celebrated (in "Dust") the immortality of love and (in "Kindliness" and the sonnet already quoted) ridiculed its empty impermanence; turned from the intellect to sheer imagination—and abandoned fantasy for an ordered philosophy. His later work indicates that Brooke had tired of shifting extremes. It is impossible to predict what integration might have come with maturity. He was dead at twenty-seven.

### THE GREAT LOVER

I have been so great a lover: filled my days
So proudly with the splendor of Love's praise,

The pain, the calm, and the astonishment,
Desire illimitable, and still content,
And all dear names men use, to cheat despair,
For the perplexed and viewless streams that bear
Our hearts at random down the dark of life.
Now, ere the unthinking silence on that strife
Steals down, I would cheat drowsy Death so far,
My night shall be remembered for a star
That outshone all the suns of all men's days.
Shall I not crown them with immortal praise
Whom I have loved, who have given me, dared with me
High secrets, and in darkness knelt to see
The inenarrable godhead of delight?
Love is a flame:—we have beaconed the world's night.
A city:—and we have built it, these and I.
An emperor:—we have taught the world to die.
So, for their sakes I loved, ere I go hence,
And the high cause of Love's magnificence,
And to keep loyalties young, I'll write those names
Golden for ever, eagles, crying flames,
And set them as a banner, that men may know,
To dare the generations, burn, and blow
Out on the wind of Time, shining and streaming. . . .

These I have loved:
White plates and cups, clean-gleaming,
Ringed with blue lines; and feathery, faëry dust;
Wet roofs, beneath the lamp-light; the strong crust
Of friendly bread; and many-tasting food;
Rainbows; and the blue bitter smoke of wood;
And radiant raindrops couching in cool flowers;
And flowers themselves, that sway through sunny hours,
Dreaming of moths that drink them under the moon;
Then, the cool kindliness of sheets, that soon
Smooth away trouble; and the rough male kiss
Of blankets; grainy wood; live hair that is
Shining and free; blue-massing clouds; the keen
Unpassioned beauty of a great machine;
The benison of hot water; furs to touch;
The good smell of old clothes; and other such—

The comfortable smell of friendly fingers,
Hair's fragrance, and the musty reek that lingers
About dead leaves and last year's ferns. . . .
Dear names,
And thousand others throng to me! Royal flames;
Sweet water's dimpling laugh from tap or spring;
Holes in the ground; and voices that do sing:
Voices in laughter, too; and body's pain,
Soon turned to peace; and the deep-panting train;
Firm sands; the little dulling edge of foam
That browns and dwindles as the wave goes home;
And washen stones, gay for an hour; the cold
Graveness of iron; moist black earthen mold;
Sleep; and high places; footprints in the dew;
And oaks; and brown horse-chestnuts, glossy-new;
And new-peeled sticks; and shining pools on grass;—
All these have been my loves. And these shall pass,
Whatever passes not, in the great hour,
Nor all my passion, all my prayers, have power
To hold them with me through the gate of Death.
They'll play deserter, turn with the traitor breath,
Break the high bond we made, and sell Love's trust
And sacramented covenant to the dust.
—Oh, never a doubt but, somewhere, I shall wake,
And give what's left of love again, and make
New friends now strangers. . . .
But the best I've known
Stays here, and changes, breaks, grows old, is blown
About the winds of the world, and fades from brains
Of living men, and dies.
Nothing remains.

O dear my loves, O faithless, once again
This one last gift I give: that after men
Shall know, and later lovers, far-removed
Praise you, "All these were lovely"; say, "He loved."

## THE HILL

Breathless, we flung us on the windy hill,
Laughed in the sun, and kissed the lovely grass.
You said, "Through glory and ecstasy we pass;
Wind, sun, and earth remain, the birds sing still,
When we are old, are old. . . ." "And when we die
All's over that is ours; and life burns on
Through other lovers, other lips," said I,
"Heart of my heart, our heaven is now, is won!"
"We are Earth's best, that learnt her lesson here.
Life is our cry. We have kept the faith!" we said;
"We shall go down with unreluctant tread
Rose-crowned into the darkness! . . ." Proud we were,
And laughed, that had such brave true things to say.
And then you suddenly cried, and turned away.

## DUST

When the white flame in us is gone,
  And we that lost the world's delight
Stiffen in darkness, left alone
  To crumble in our separate night;

When your swift hair is quiet in death,
  And through the lips corruption thrust
Has stilled the labor of my breath—
  When we are dust, when we are dust!—

Not dead, not undesirous yet,
  Still sentient, still unsatisfied,
We'll ride the air, and shine and flit,
  Around the places where we died,

And dance as dust before the sun,
  And light of foot, and unconfined,
Hurry from road to road, and run
  About the errands of the wind.

And every mote, on earth or air,
  Will speed and gleam down later days,
And like a secret pilgrim fare
  By eager and invisible ways,

Nor ever rest, nor ever lie,
  Till, beyond thinking, out of view,
One mote of all the dust that's I
  Shall meet one atom that was you.

Then in some garden hushed from wind,
  Warm in a sunset's afterglow,
The lovers in the flowers will find
  A sweet and strange unquiet grow

Upon the peace; and, past desiring,
  So high a beauty in the air,
And such a light, and such a quiring,
  And such a radiant ecstasy there,

They'll know not if it's fire, or dew,
  Or out of earth, or in the height,
Singing, or flame, or scent, or hue,
  Or two that pass, in light, to light,

Out of the garden higher, higher . . .
  But in that instant they shall learn
The shattering fury of our fire,
  And the weak passionless hearts will burn

And faint in that amazing glow,
  Until the darkness close above;
And they will know—poor fools, they'll know!—
  One moment, what it is to love.

## THE SOLDIER

If I should die, think only this of me;
  That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
  In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
  Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's breathing English air,
  Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

## HEAVEN

Fish (fly-replete, in depth of June
Dawdling away their wat'ry noon)
Ponder deep wisdom, dark or clear,
Each secret fishy hope or fear.
Fish say, they have their Stream and Pond;
But is there anything Beyond?
This life cannot be All, they swear,
For how unpleasant, if it were!
One may not doubt that, somehow, good
Shall come of Water and of Mud;
And, sure, the reverent eye must see
A Purpose in Liquidity.
We darkly know, by Faith we cry,
The future is not Wholly Dry.
Mud unto Mud!—Death eddies near—
Not here the appointed End, not here!
But somewhere, beyond Space and Time,
Is wetter water, slimier slime!
And there (they trust) there swimmeth One
Who swam ere rivers were begun,
Immense, of fishy form and mind,
Squamous, omnipotent and kind;
And under that Almighty Fin
The littlest fish may enter in.
Oh! never fly conceals a hook,
Fish say, in the Eternal Brook,
But more than mundane weeds are there,
And mud, celestially fair;
Fat caterpillars drift around,
And Paradisal grubs are found;
Unfading moths, immortal flies,
And the worm that never dies.

And in that Heaven of all their wish,
There shall be no more land, say fish.

## SECOND BEST

Here in the dark, O heart;
Alone with the enduring Earth, and Night,
And Silence, and the warm strange smell of clover;
Clear-visioned, though it break you; far apart
From the dead best, the dear and old delight;
Throw down your dreams of immortality,
O faithful, O foolish lover!
Here's peace for you, and surety; here the one
Wisdom—the truth!—"All day the good glad sun
Showers love and labor on you, wine and song;
The greenwood laughs, the wind blows, all day long
Till night." And night ends all things.
Then shall be
No lamp relumed in heaven, no voices crying,
Or changing lights, or dreams and forms that hover!
(And, heart, for all your sighing,
That gladness and those tears, are over, over. . . .)

And has the truth brought no new hope at all,
Heart, that you're weeping yet for Paradise?
Do they still whisper, the old weary cries?
"*'Mid youth and song, feasting and carnival,*
*Through laughter, through the roses, as of old*
*Comes Death, on shadowy and relentless feet,*
*Death, unappeasable by prayer or gold;*
*Death is the end, the end!*"
Proud, then, clear-eyed and laughing, go to greet
Death as a friend!

Exile of immortality, strongly wise,
Strain through the dark with undesirous eyes
To what may lie beyond it. Sets your star,
O heart, for ever! Yet, behind the night,
Waits for the great unborn, somewhere afar,
Some white tremendous daybreak. And the light,

Returning, shall give back the golden hours,
Ocean a windless level, Earth a lawn
Spacious and full of sunlit dancing-places,
And laughter, and music, and among the flowers,
The gay child-hearts of men, and the child-faces
O heart, in the great dawn!

## THE BUSY HEART

Now that we've done our best and worst, and parted,
I would fill my mind with thoughts that will not rend.
(O heart, I do not dare go empty-hearted)
I'll think of Love in books, Love without end;
Women with child, content; and old men sleeping;
And wet strong plowlands, scarred for certain grain;
And babes that weep, and so forget their weeping;
And the young heavens, forgetful after rain;
And evening hush, broken by homing wings;
And Song's nobility, and Wisdom holy,
That live, we dead. I would think of a thousand things,
Lovely and durable, and taste them slowly,
One after one, like tasting a sweet food.
I have need to busy my heart with quietude.

## DINING-ROOM TEA

When you were there, and you, and you,
Happiness crowned the night; I too,
Laughing and looking, one of all,
I watched the quivering lamplight fall
On plate and flowers and pouring tea
And cup and cloth; and they and we
Flung all the dancing moments by
With jest and glitter. Lip and eye
Flashed on the glory, shone and cried,
Improvident, unmemoried;
And fitfully, and like a flame
The light of laughter went and came.
Proud in their careless transience moved
The changing faces that I loved.

Till suddenly, and otherwhence,
I looked upon your innocence.
For lifted clear and still and strange
From the dark woven flow of change
Under a vast and starless sky
I saw the immortal moment lie.
One instant I, an instant, knew
As God knows all. And it and you,
I, above Time, oh, blind! could see
In witless immortality.

I saw the marble cup; the tea,
Hung on the air, an amber stream;
I saw the fire's unglittering gleam,
The painted flame, the frozen smoke.
No more the flooding lamplight broke
On flying eyes and lips and hair;
But lay, but slept unbroken there,
On stiller flesh, and body breathless,
And lips and laughter stayed and deathless,
And words on which no silence grew.
Light was more alive than you.

For suddenly, and otherwhence,
I looked on your magnificence.
I saw the stillness and the light,
And you, august, immortal, white,
Holy and strange; and every glint
Posture and jest and thought and tint
Freed from the mask of transiency,
Triumphant in eternity,
Immote, immortal.

Dazed at length
Human eyes grew, mortal strength
Wearied; and Time began to creep.
Change closed about me like a sleep.
Light glinted on the eyes I loved.
The cup was filled. The bodies moved.
The drifting petal came to ground.
The laughter chimed its perfect round,

The broken syllable was ended.
And I, so certain and so friended,
How could I cloud, or how distress,
The heaven of your unconsciousness?
Or shake at Time's sufficient spell,
Stammering of lights unutterable?
The eternal holiness of you,
The timeless end, you never knew,
The peace that lay, the light that shone.
You never knew that I had gone
A million miles away, and stayed
A million years. The laughter played
Unbroken round me; and the jest
Flashed on. And we that knew the best
Down wonderful hours grew happier yet.
I sang at heart, and talked, and ate,
And lived from laugh to laugh, I too,
When you were there, and you, and you.

## THE OLD VICARAGE, GRANTCHESTER

(*Café des Westens, Berlin. May, 1912*)

Just now the lilac is in bloom,
All before my little room;
And in my flower-beds, I think,
Smile the carnation and the pink;
And down the borders, well I know,
The poppy and the pansy blow . . .
Oh! there the chestnuts, summer through,
Beside the river make for you
A tunnel of green gloom, and sleep
Deeply above; and green and deep
The stream mysterious glides beneath,
Green as a dream and deep as death.
—Oh, damn! I know it! and I know
How the May fields all golden show,
And when the day is young and sweet,
Glide gloriously the bare feet
That run to bathe . . .
*Du lieber Gott!*

Here am I, sweating, sick, and hot,
And there the shadowed waters fresh
Lean up to embrace the naked flesh.
*Temperamentvoll* German Jews
Drink beer around;—and *there* the dews
Are soft beneath a morn of gold.
Here tulips bloom as they are told;
Unkempt about those hedges blows
An English unofficial rose;
And there the unregulated sun
Slopes down to rest when day is done,
And wakes a vague unpunctual star,
A slippered Hesper; and there are
Meads towards Haslingfield and Coton
Where *das Betreten's* not *verboten.*

εἴθε γενοίμην . . . would I were
In Grantchester, in Grantchester!—
Some, it may be, can get in touch
With Nature there, or Earth, or such.
And clever modern men have seen
A Faun a-peeping through the green,
And felt the Classics were not dead,
To glimpse a Naiad's reedy head,
Or hear the Goat-foot piping low; . . .
But these are things I do not know.
I only know that you may lie
Day long and watch the Cambridge sky,
And, flower-lulled in sleepy grass,
Hear the cool lapse of hours pass,
Until the centuries blend and blur
In Grantchester, in Grantchester. . . .
Still in the dawnlit waters cool
His ghostly Lordship swims his pool,
And tries the strokes, essays the tricks,
Long learnt on Hellespont, or Styx.
Dan Chaucer hears his river still
Chatter beneath a phantom mill.
Tennyson notes, with studious eye,
How Cambridge waters hurry by . . .

And in that garden, black and white,
Creep whispers through the grass all night;
And spectral dance, before the dawn,
A hundred Vicars down the lawn;
Curates, long dust, will come and go
On lissom, clerical, printless toe;
And oft between the boughs is seen
The sly shade of a Rural Dean . . .
Till, at a shiver in the skies,
Vanishing with Satanic cries,
The prim ecclesiastic rout
Leaves but a startled sleeper-out,
Gray heavens, the first bird's drowsy calls,
The falling house that never falls.

God! I will pack, and take a train,
And get me to England once again!
For England's the one land, I know,
Where men with Splendid Hearts may go;
And Cambridgeshire, of all England,
The shire for Men who Understand;
And of *that* district I prefer
The lovely hamlet Grantchester.
For Cambridge people rarely smile,
Being urban, squat, and packed with guile;
And Royston men in the far South
Are black and fierce and strange of mouth;
At Over they fling oaths at one,
And worse than oaths at Trumpington,
And Ditton girls are mean and dirty,
And there's none in Harston under thirty,
And folks in Shelford and those parts
Have twisted lips and twisted hearts,
And Barton men make Cockney rhymes,
And Coton's full of nameless crimes,
And things are done you'd not believe
At Madingley on Christmas Eve.
Strong men have run for miles and miles,
When one from Cherry Hinton smiles,
Strong men have blanched, and shot their wives,
Rather than send them to St. Ives;

Strong men have cried like babes, bydam,
To hear what happened in Babraham.
But Grantchester! ah, Grantchester!
There's peace and holy quiet there,
Great clouds along pacific skies,
And men and women with straight eyes,
Lithe children lovelier than a dream,
A bosky wood, a slumb'rous stream,
And little kindly winds that creep
Round twilight corners, half asleep.
In Grantchester their skins are white;
They bathe by day, they bathe by night;
The women there do all they ought;
The men observe the Rules of Thought;
They love the Good; they worship Truth;
They laugh uproariously in youth;
(And when they get to feeling old,
They up and shoot themselves, I'm told) . . .

Ah God! to see the branches stir
Across the moon at Grantchester!
To smell the thrilling-sweet and rotten
Unforgettable, unforgotten
River-smell, and hear the breeze
Sobbing in the little trees.
Say, do the elm-clumps greatly stand
Still guardians of that holy land?
The chestnuts shade, in reverend dream,
The yet unacademic stream?
Is dawn a secret shy and cold
Anadyomene, silver-gold?
And sunset still a golden sea
From Haslingfield to Madingley?
And after, ere the night is born,
Do hares come out about the corn?
Oh, is the water sweet and cool,
Gentle and brown, above the pool?
And laughs the immortal river still
Under the mill, under the mill?
Say, is there Beauty yet to find?
And Certainty? And Quiet kind?

Deep meadows yet, for to forget
The lies, and truths, and pain? . . . oh! yet
Stands the Church clock at ten to three?
And is there honey still for tea?

## WINIFRED M. LETTS

Winifred M. Letts was born in Ireland and her early work concerned itself almost entirely with the humor and pathos found in her immediate surroundings. *Songs from Leinster* (1913) is her most characteristic collection; a volume full of the poetry of simple people and humble souls. She has called herself "a back-door sort of bard" and the appellation is not inaccurate for she is particularly effective in the old ballad measure and in quaint portrayal of Irish peasants rather than of Gaelic kings and pagan heroes. She has also written three novels, five books for children, two plays produced at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin and a later volume of verse, *Hallow E'en* (1916).

### GRANDEUR

Poor Mary Byrne is dead,
An' all the world may see
Where she lies upon her bed
Just as fine as quality.

She lies there still and white,
With candles either hand
That'll guard her through the night:
Sure she never was so grand.

She holds her rosary,
Her hands clasped on her breast.
Just as dacint as can be
In the habit she's been dressed.

In life her hands were red
With every sort of toil,
But they're white now she is dead,
An' they've sorra mark of soil.

The neighbors come and go,
They kneel to say a prayer,
I wish herself could know
Of the way she's lyin' there.

It was work from morn till night,
And hard she earned her bread:
But I'm thinking she's a right
To be aisy now she's dead.

When other girls were gay,
At wedding or at fair,
She'd be toiling all the day,
Not a minyit could she spare.

An' no one missed her face,
Or sought her in a crowd,
But today they throng the place
Just to see her in her shroud.

The creature in her life
Drew trouble with each breath;
She was just "poor Jim Byrne's wife"—
But she's lovely in her death.

I wish the dead could see
The splendor of a wake,
For it's proud herself would be
Of the keening that they make.

Och! little Mary Byrne,
You welcome every guest,
Is it now you take your turn
To be merry with the rest?

I'm thinking you'd be glad,
Though the angels make your bed,
Could you see the care we've had
To respect you—now you're dead.

Joseph (Mary) Plunkett was born in Ireland in 1887 and devoted himself to the cause that compelled so many martyrs. He gave his hours and finally his life in an effort to establish the freedom of his country. He was one of the leaders of that group of Nationalists which included MacDonagh and Padraic Pearse. (See page 446.) Had he been allowed to develop his gifts as singer, there is no doubt that he would have added a luster to the roll of Irish poets. Even the two brief lyrics reprinted here show (*vide* "Poppies" in particular) that Plunkett possessed a subtle craftsmanship to express his tender mysticism.

After the Easter Week uprising in Dublin in 1916, Plunkett and his compatriots were arrested by the British Government and executed.

## I SEE HIS BLOOD UPON THE ROSE

I see His blood upon the rose
And in the stars the glory of His eyes,
His body gleams amid eternal snows,
His tears fall from the skies.

I see His face in every flower;
The thunder and the singing of the birds
Are but His voice—and carven by His power,
Rocks are His written words.

All pathways by His feet are worn,
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea,
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn,
His cross is every tree.

## POPPIES

O Sower of sorrow,
From the seed of your sowing
Tomorrow the mower
The wheat will be mowing.

O Reaper of ruth,
Mid the roots of your reaping
Springs the truth that in sleep
Bears the fruit of all sleeping.

O Binder of sheaves
That are loose for your binding,
Withered leaves you shall find
And shall lose after finding.

## EDWIN MUIR

Edwin Muir was born in Deerness, in the Orkney Islands, in 1887. He had practically no schooling in boyhood and none whatever after his fourteenth year, when his family moved to Glasgow and young Muir started work as a clerk. Although he is best known as a critic, Muir's first literary work to be published was in verse. Later, he contributed a series of prose aphorisms to *The New Age* which were published in book form under the title of *We Moderns* (1918), a volume which aroused the enthusiasm of critics as difficult to impress as H. L. Mencken.

In 1919, Muir became assistant editor of *The New Age*. Two years later, he gave up all editorial work, and went to live in Central Europe. It was while living in Austria that his *Latitudes* (1924), a collection of essays playful and yet profound appeared, attracting a greater audience than Muir had ever reached. Although his verse, *First Poems* (1926), is little known, it is Muir's favorite medium and reveals the same freshness of feeling as his prose.

Besides his poetry, Muir has established himself as one of the most sympathetic translators from the German, especially successful in the case of Hauptmann and Feuchtwanger. His first novel, *The Marionette* appeared in 1927, his third and most important set of studies, *Transition*, in 1926.

### THE ENCHANTED PRINCE

Here lying on the ancient mount,
  Through days grown stagnant and too rich,
My half-raised eyes keep sleepy count
  Of wild weeds springing in the ditch,

Of turf so quiet and so clean
  The sun's light seems more ancient there,
As if the softly slumbering green
  Had grown indifferent to the air.

And all worn smooth 'neath deadened years
Which have forgotten that they roll,
Though at its secret term appears
The lawful grass upon the knoll.

There lies the peace of ended toil
Heavy and rich, too rich, as though
A race were mingled with the soil
And could no more rise up and go.

A willow hangs above the vale,
Here at my foot, and I have sight,
Through twisted branches dusty pale,
Of distant hills in different light.

So inaccessible and so clear,
The houses gleam on every hill!
The silent valley tumbles sheer,
Like an abyss where time is still.

Yet here upon the enchanted mount
I look out towards the farther heights,
And, lost far onward, strive to count
Ambiguous shapes in shifting lights,

Till, where peaks battle in the haze,
In mortal fight without a cry,
Upon unnameable things I gaze,
And dragons rearing at the sky.

If now, turned back, I think again
That all these lines which heaved and strove
Just now, were quiet earth, I fain
Would perish of a boundless love. . . .

Here lying on the ancient mount,
Through days grown stagnant and too rich,
My heart is dust, the while I count
The wild weeds springing in the ditch.

### GRASS

The vague immutable contour of the earth—
This insubstantial phantom of green hills
Which ever falling away forever change,
Perpetual mirage hung beyond Time's reach—
Is grass, which sets the round world in our sight.
Grass standing thick and still in soundless vales
No eye has seen, or straggling into wastes,
Beat down but spared by winds which tears up oaks;
Green in the sun, and beneath smothering mists,
Where each moist blade sweats one clear glistening drop;
Grass growing below huge rocks and round lone graves;
Climbing, a tiny host, up mountainsides;
Hanging on mist-locked keeps above dun lakes;
Tossing on low small islets on the tide,
Soft meadows mid the currents of the sea,
Where the green glossy blades drink the blue wave;
Grass waiting in dark table-lands of snow;
O'er new-riven chasms weaving its light veil,
And quiet fields o'er fallen and jagged peaks:
The invulnerable vesture of the world.

## EDITH SITWELL

Edith Sitwell, daughter of Sir George and Lady Ida Sitwell, granddaughter of the Earl of Landesborough, was born at Scarborough, Yorkshire, in 1887. She was educated, as she puts it, "in secrecy" and in 1914 came to London, where she has lived ever since. A portrait of her, painted by Alvaro Guevara, has been bought for the nation and hangs in the Tate Gallery.

In 1916, she began the editing of *Wheels*, a determinedly modern anthology which outraged most of the conservative critics. Her own poems provided an even greater series of shocks. After a mild and undistinguished début—*The Mother and Other Poems* (1915)—Miss Sitwell published, in a succession so speedy as to seem little less than rapid-fire, *Clown's Houses* (1918), *The Wooden Pegasus* (1920), *Façade* (1922), *Bucolic Comedies* (1923).

In these volumes—particularly in the last two—Miss Sitwell limits her gamut; but, within her range, there is no poet quite like her. Her favorite instrument seems to be the xylophone, and it is amazing what effects she produces from its restricted timbre.

Miss Sitwell is a virtuoso in the communication of a half-wooden, half-glassy tone which is seldom without brilliance. It has been objected that Miss Sitwell's poetry is artificial, and this may be true. But the criticism is not as devastating as it seems, for hers is obviously, and purposefully, an artificial world. It is a curious, semi-mechanical heaven and earth over which her keen eye ranges, a landscape in which Miss Sitwell sees vividly, as none before her has seen, skies of paper, seas of wool, the "reynard-colored sun," the world "like a bare egg laid by the feathered air," the "coltish wind nuzzling the hand," trees "hissing like green geese," "barley-sugar children,"—she even hears Silence "like a slow-leaking tap." If Miss Sitwell's is nothing but a clock-work, conjuring-trick sort of poetry—and it is much more than that—there has rarely been so dazzling a set of ingenuities, so brilliant an exhibition of verbal legerdemain.

But, it must be reiterated, Miss Sitwell is much more than an adroit juggler of startling phrases. Purely as nonsense, she has written some of the most delectable nonsense verses of the age; her grotesque nursery rhymes are, in their own genre, as memorable as De la Mare's. The secret of her serious poetry is scarcely more difficult to capture. After one's initial bewilderment (due chiefly to the galloping pace of her verse), the wit of her comments, the fitness of her strange associations, the novel romanticism of an essentially feminine mind—all these lie ready to disclose themselves beneath the surface glitter.

Beginning with *The Sleeping Beauty* (1924) Miss Sitwell has progressively essayed to humanize her hard, bright idiom. Here, as in the succeeding *Troy Park* (1925) and *Rustic Elegies* (1927), she achieves an intensity which her other work, for all its felicities, never expressed. Her poems begin to approach reality, but this recorder is never content with representation. She delights to juxtapose actualities and impossibilities; assuming, in quick succession, an enigmatic mask, a bizarre clarity, shifting suddenly from patent absurdity to piercing sympathy. No longer reflecting life from the outside, she adds the note of compassion. She moves with care and sensitivity, delicately charting the border between reality and insanity. She is Donne one moment, Lewis Carroll the next. To apply the term "mystic" to her will surprise only those who have never cared to see through the glassy surface of her verse. To such readers, Miss Sitwell will remain the artificer of a *papier maché* universe, a juggler amusing herself in a world where grass is shrill, fire furry, where rains hang like wooden stalactites, and where the creaking air, combed seas, and spangled emotions are equally automatic.

In the later volumes her occupation with the human drama is far

more apparent. Here man's hunger for beauty is no longer seen as a pitiful joke in a vegetable existence, but as an insatiate passion. The pictures become actually autobiographical; the touching "Colonel Fantock" reveals the poet in her simplest mood, and those who know her brothers Osbert and Sacheverell will have little difficulty identifying "Dagobert" and "Peregrine."

*Gold Coast Customs and Other Poems* (1930) repeats the pattern toward which Miss Sitwell's work has been tending: a combination of contempt and nostalgia. The scorn is for a fatuous, loud world she refuses to join and the nostalgia is for the quiet, primitive world left in childhood. Her idiom, more than ever, is a building-up of repetitions and contrasting shocks with a lush music, lingering and illogical. If the luxuriance recalls the modern ballet, it is no accident, since this is the very effect that the poet tries to achieve. It is stylized, and opulent, and always original in movement.

It should be added that Miss Sitwell has written some of the best if slightly mad metaphysics of her day. In her incongruous collating of objects, colors, sensory distortions, she is a grown-up child, innocently absurd, accidentally wise, scattering her observations to a sometimes appreciative though often bewildered audience.

## AUBADE

Jane, Jane,
Tall as a crane,
The morning light creaks down again.

Comb your cockscomb-ragged hair;
Jane, Jane, come down the stair.

Each dull blunt wooden stalactite
Of rain creaks, hardened by the light,

Sounding like an overtone
From some lonely world unknown.

But the creaking empty light
Will never harden into sight,

Will never penetrate your brain
With overtones like the blunt rain.

The light would show (if it could harden)
Eternities of kitchen-garden,

Cockscomb flowers that none will pluck,
And wooden flowers that 'gin to cluck.

In the kitchen you must light
Flames as staring, red and white

As carrots or as turnips, shining
Where the cold dawn light lies whining.

Cockscomb hair on the cold wind
Hangs limp, turns the milk's weak mind. . . .

Jane, Jane,
Tall as a crane,
The morning light creaks down again!

## THE KING OF CHINA'S DAUGHTER

The King of China's daughter,
She never would love me
Though I hung my cap and bells upon
Her nutmeg tree.
For oranges and lemons,
The stars in bright blue air,
(I stole them long ago, my dear)
Were dangling there.
The Moon did give me silver pence,
The Sun did give me gold,
And both together softly blew
And made my porridge cold;
But the King of China's daughter
Pretended not to see,
When I hung my cap and bells upon
Her nutmeg tree.

## SOLO FOR EAR-TRUMPET

The carriage brushes through the bright
Leaves (violent jets from life to light).
Strong polished speed is plunging, heaves
Between the showers of bright hot leaves.

The window-glasses glaze our faces
And jar them to the very basis,—
But they could never put a polish
Upon my manners, or abolish
My most distinct disinclination
For calling on a rich relation!
In her house,—bulwark built between
The life man lives and visions seen,—
The sunlight hiccups white as chalk,
Grown drunk with emptiness of talk,
And silence hisses like a snake,
Invertebrate and rattling ache.

. . . . .

Till suddenly, Eternity
Drowns all the houses like a sea,
And down the street the Trump of Doom
Blares,—barely shakes this drawing-room
Where raw-edged shadows sting forlorn
As dank dark nettles. Down the horn
Of her ear-trumpet I convey
The news that: "It is Judgment Day!"
"Speak louder; I don't catch, my dear."
I roared: "*It is the Trump we hear!*"
"The *What?*"—"The T R U M P !" . . .
"I shall complain—
Those boy-scouts practicing again!"

## GARDENER JANUS CATCHES A NAIAD

Baskets of ripe fruit in air
The bird songs seem suspended where

Between the hairy leaves trills dew
All tasting of fresh green anew.

Ma'am, I've heard your laughter flare
Through your waspish-gilded hair:

Feathered masks,
Pots of peas,—
Janus asks
Nought of these

Creaking water
Brightly striped
Now I've caught her—
Shrieking biped.
Flute sounds jump
And turn together,
Changing clumps
Of glassy feather.
In among the
Pots of peas
Naiad changes—
Quick as these.

## SPINNING SONG

The miller's daughter
Combs her hair,
Like flocks of dove
As soft as vair. . . .

Oh, how those soft flocks flutter down
Over the empty grassy town.

Like a queen in a crown
Of gold light, she
Sits 'neath the shadows'
Flickering tree—

Till the old dame went the way she came,
Playing bobcherry with a candle-flame.

Now Min the cat
With her white velvet gloves
Watches where sat
The mouse with her loves—

(Old and malicious Mrs. Grundy
Whose washing day is from Monday to Monday.)

"Not a crumb," said Min,
"To a mouse I'll be giving.
For a mouse must spin
To earn her living."

So poor Mrs. Mouse and her three cross Aunts
Nibble snow that rustles like gold wheat plants.

And the miller's daughter
Combs her locks,
Like running water
Those dove-soft flocks;

And her mouth is sweet as a honey flower cold
But her heart is heavy as bags of gold.

The shadow-mice said
"We will line with down
From those doves, our bed
And our slippers and gown,

For everything comes to the shadows at last
If the spinning-wheel Time move slow or fast."

## PANOPE

How lovely are the tombs of the dead nymphs
On the heroic shore—the glittering plinths
Of jacynth . . . hyacinthine waves profound
Sigh of the beauty out of sight and sound

And many a golden foot that pressed the sand—
Panope walking like the pomp of waves
With plumaged helmet near the fountain caves
The panoply of suns on distant strand—

Is only now an arena for the worm,
Her golden flesh lies in the dust's frail storm

And beauty water-bright for long is laid
Deep in the empire of eternal shade—

Only the sighing waves know now the plinth
Of those deep tombs that were of hyacinth.

But still the echoes of that helmeted bright hair
Are like the pomp of tropic suns, the blare

That from the inaccessible horizon runs—
The eternal music of heroic suns
When their strong youth comes freshened from deep seas—
And the first music heard among the trees.

## COLONEL FANTOCK

Thus spoke the lady underneath the tree:
I was a member of a family
Whose legend was of hunting—(all the rare
And unattainable brightness of the air)—
A race whose fabled skill in falconry
Was used on the small song-birds and a winged
And blinded Destiny. . . . I think that only
Winged ones know the highest eyrie is so lonely.

There in a land austere and elegant
The castle seemed an arabesque in music;
We moved in an hallucination born
Of silence, which like music gave us lotus
To ear, perfuming lips and our long eyelids
As we trailed over the sad summer grass
Or sat beneath a smooth and mournful tree.

And Time passed, suavely, imperceptibly.

But Dagobert and Peregrine and I
Were children then; we walked like shy gazelles
Among the music of thin flower-bells.
And life still held some promise,—never ask
Of what,—but life seemed less a stranger then
Than ever after in this cold existence.
I always was a little outside life,—
And so the things we touch could comfort me,
I loved the shy dreams we could hear and see—
For I was like one dead, like a small ghost,
A little cold air wandering and lost.

All day within the straw-roofed arabesque
Of the towered castle and the sleepy gardens wandered
We; those delicate paladins, the waves
Told us fantastic legends that we pondered.

And the soft leaves were breasted like a dove,
Crooning old mournful tales of untrue love.

When night came sounding like the growth of trees,
My great-grandmother bent to say good night,
And the enchanted moonlight seemed transformed
Into the silvery tinkling of an old
And gentle music-box that played a tune
Of Circean enchantments and far seas,
Her voice was lulling like the splash of these
When she had given me her good night kiss
There, in her lengthened shadow, I saw this
Old military ghost with mayfly whiskers,—
Poor harmless creature, blown by the cold wind,
Boasting of unseen, unreal victories
To a harsh unbelieving world unkind,—
For all the battles that this warrior fought
Were with cold poverty and helpless age—
His spoils were shelters from the winter's rage.
And so forever through his braggart voice,
Through all that martial trumpet's sound, his soul
Wept a little sound, so pitiful,
Knowing that he is outside life for ever
With no one that will warm or comfort him. . . .
He is not even dead, but Death's buffoon
On a bare stage, a shrunken pantaloon.—
His military banner never fell,
Nor his account of victories, the stories
Of old apocryphal misfortunes, glories
Which comforted his heart in later life
When he was the Napoleon of the schoolroom
And all the victories he gained were over
Little boys who would not learn to spell.

All day within the sweet and ancient gardens
He had my childish self for audience—
Whose body flat and strange, whose pale straight hair
Made me appear as though I had been drowned—
(We all have the remote air of a legend)—
And Dagobert my brother whose large strength,
Great body and grave beauty still reflect

The Angevin dead kings from whom we spring;
And sweet as the young tender winds that stir
In thickets where the earliest flower-bells sing
Upon the boughs, was his just character;
And Peregrine the youngest with a naïve
Shy grace like a faun's, whose slant eyes seemed
The warm green light beneath eternal boughs.
His hair was like the fronds of feathers, life
In him was changing ever, springing fresh
As the dark songs of birds . . . the furry warmth
And purring sound of fires was in his voice
Which never failed to warm and comfort me.

And there were haunted summers in Troy Park
When all the stillness budded into leaves;
We listened like Ophelia drowned in blond
And fluid hair, beneath stag-antlered trees;
Then in the ancient park the country-pleasant
Shadows fell as brown as any pheasant,
And Colonel Fantock seemed like one of these.
Sometimes for comfort in the castle kitchen
He drowsed, where with a sweet and velvet lip
The snapdragons within the fire
Of their red summer never tire.
And Colonel Fantock liked our company.
For us he wandered over each old lie,
Changing the flowering hawthorn full of bees
Into the silver helm of Hercules,
For us defended Troy from the top stair
Outside the nursery, when the calm full moon
Was like the sound within the growth of trees.
But then came one cruel day in deepest June
When pink flowers seemed a sweet Mozartian tune,
And Colonel Fantock pondered o'er a book.
A gay voice like a honeysuckle nook,—
So sweet,—said, "It is Colonel Fantock's age
Which makes him babble." . . . Blown by winter's rage
The poor old man then knew his creeping fate,
The darkening shadow that would take his sight
And hearing; and he thought of his saved pence
Which scarce would rent a grave . . . that youthful voice

Was a dark bell which ever clanged "Too late"—
A creeping shadow that would steal from him
Even the little boys who would not spell—
His only prisoners. . . . On that June day
Cold Death had taken his first citadel.

## F. W. HARVEY

Frederick William Harvey was born in Gloucestershire in 1888, and was educated at Rossall. He became a solicitor in 1912, enlisted in August, 1914, and was taken prisoner in 1916. It was in the German prison camp at Gütersloh that he wrote "The Bugler," one of the isolated noble poems produced by the war.

Although much of Harvey's verse is haphazard and journalistic, several passages in *Gloucestershire Friends* (1917) and *Farewell* (1921) have verve and *esprit* if not the stuff of poetry. His work has been especially well received in his own county, Gloucestershire.

*Comrades in Captivity* is a prose volume recording Harvey's life in seven German prisons.

### THE BUGLER

God dreamed a man;
Then, having firmly shut
Life like a precious metal in his fist
Withdrew, His labor done. Thus did begin
Our various divinity and sin.
For some to plowshares did the metal twist,
And others—dreaming empires—straightway cut
Crowns for their aching foreheads. Others beat
Long nails and heavy hammers for the feet
Of their forgotten Lord. (Who dares to boast
That he is guiltless?) Others coined it: most
Did with it—simply nothing. (Here again
Who cries his innocence?) Yet doth remain
Metal unmarred, to each man more or less,
Whereof to fashion perfect loveliness.
For me, I do but bear within my hand
(For sake of Him our Lord, now long forsaken)
A simple bugle such as may awaken
With one high morning note a drowsing man:

That wheresoe'er within my motherland
That sound may come, 'twill echo far and wide
Like pipes of battle calling up a clan,
Trumpeting men through beauty to God's side.

## IN FLANDERS

I'm homesick for my hills again—
  My hills again!
To see above the Severn plain,
Unscabbarded against the sky,
The blue high blade of Cotswold lie;
The giant clouds go royally
By jagged Malvern with a train
Of shadows. Where the land is low
Like a huge imprisoning O
I hear a heart that's sound and high,
I hear the heart within me cry:
"I'm homesick for my hills again—
  My hills again!
Cotswold or Malvern, sun or rain!
  My hills again!"

## NOVEMBER

He has hanged himself—the Sun.
  He dangles
A scarecrow in thin air.

He is dead for love—the Sun;
  He who in forest tangles
Wooed all things fair.

That great lover—the Sun,
  Now spangles
The wood with blood-stains.

He has hanged himself—the Sun.
  How thin he dangles
In these gray rains!

Arthur Waley was born in 1889 and was educated at Rugby School and King's College, Cambridge. He entered the employ of the British Museum in 1913 and began the study of Chinese and Japanese in that year. Five years later he was known as one of the foremost English authorities on Chinese and Japanese literatures.

His first publication, *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* (1918, revised edition 1927) has taken its place as a standard work. *More Translations* (1919) and *The Temple* (1923) affirm his admirers' contention that Waley is no mere competent adapter, but a poet in his own right. Whatever the Chinese original may be, the re-creation is a separate work in which the craftsman reveals himself. In his balanced imagery, his enameled phrases, his use but not abuse of color, Waley's own poetic personality is imposed on the originals as certainly as Khayyám's Rubáiyát was suffused with Fitzgerald. As Humbert Wolfe wrote in his foreword to the pamphlet *Poems from the Chinese* published in The Augustan Books of English Poetry in 1928, "We must address ourselves to these poems as though they had been written by an Englishman of the twentieth century, and judge them on that basis. It is a severe test to apply to translations, but Mr. Waley emerges from it serenely victorious. Indeed, serenity is the keynote of all this work—the serenity of assured mastery in a difficult medium, but still more of outlook. The beauty with which these poems are inlaid is fundamentally a wise beauty, and the wisdom is as much in the shape of Mr. Waley's mind as in that of China."

Waley has also translated a quantity of Oriental prose, notably those volumes of fascinating narrative *The Tale of Genji* (1925-1928).

## FROM THE "BOOK OF ODES"

*Anon.* (*c. 1000* B.C.)

There grows an elm-tree on the hill,
And by the mere an alder-tree—
You have a coat, but do not wear it,
You have a gown, but do not trail it,
You have a horse, but do not ride it,
A coach, but do not drive it,
And so it will be when you are dead
And others can enjoy them!
There grows a gum-tree on the hill,

And by the mere a chestnut tree.
You have wine and food, why do you forget
Sometimes to play your lute,
Sometimes to laugh and sing,
Sometimes to steal new playtime from the night?
Shall it be so when you are dead
And others have your house?

## HOT CAKE

*Shu Hsi* (*c.* A.D. *281*)

Winter has come; fierce is the cold;
In the sharp morning air new-risen we meet.
Rheum freezes in the nose;
Frost hangs about the chin.
For hollow bellies, for chattering teeth and shivering knees
What better than hot cake?
Soft as the down of spring,
Whiter than autumn wool!
Dense and swift the steam
Rises, swells and spreads.
Fragrance flies through the air,
Is scattered far and wide,
Steals down along the wind and wets
The covetous mouth of the passer-by.
Servants and grooms
Throw sidelong glances, munch the empty air.
They lick their lips who serve;
While lines of envious lackeys by the wall
Stand dryly swallowing.

## THE CRANES

*Po Chü-i* (A.D. *830*)

The western wind has blown but a few days;
Yet the first leaf already flies from the bough.
On the drying paths I walk in my thin shoes;
In the first cold I have donned my quilted coat.
Through shallow ditches the floods are clearing away;

Through sparse bamboos trickles a slanting light.
In the early dusk, down an alley of green moss,
The garden-boy is leading the cranes home.

## W. J. TURNER

Walter James (Redfern) Turner was born in Melbourne, Australia, in 1889. He was educated at Scotch College, Melbourne, and, at seventeen, made the long journey to Europe. He studied in Germany and, shortly afterward, came to England, where, except for short intervals of travel, he has lived ever since.

His activities have been numerous. He was literary editor of *The Daily Herald*, dramatic critic of *The London Mercury*, and musical critic for three English weeklies. In the last rôle, his essays have been collected in three volumes, the first being *Music and Life* (1921). Later Turner made a reputation as an incisive dramatist, publishing the imaginative *The Man Who Ate the Popomack* (1922) and the satiric *Smaragda's Lover* (1924).

But it is as a poet that Turner first attracted—and still challenges—attention. *The Hunter and other Poems* (1916) contains other matter besides the whimsical "Romance," which has been so much quoted. *The Dark Fire* (1918) suggests if it does not sound depths; repressed passion adds a somber note to the bright fancies. Turner's more recent volumes, *Paris and Helen* (1921), *In Time Like Glass* (1921) and *Landscape of Cytherea* (1923), suffer from an overproductive and uncritical ease, but many of the individual poems are on a level with the author's successful work. A dramatic poem, *The Seven Days of the Sun* (1925) was followed by the simpler and more persuasive *New Poems* (1928). A critical study of Beethoven was published in 1927.

### ROMANCE

When I was but thirteen or so
I went into a golden land,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Took me by the hand.

My father died, my brother too,
They passed like fleeting dreams,
I stood where Popocatapetl
In the sunlight gleams.

I dimly heard the master's voice
And boys far-off at play,—
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Had stolen me away.

I walked in a great golden dream
To and fro from school—
Shining Popocatapetl
The dusty streets did rule.

I walked home with a gold dark boy
And never a word I'd say,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Had taken my speech away.

I gazed entranced upon his face
Fairer than any flower—
O shining Popocatapetl
It was thy magic hour:

The houses, people, traffic seemed
Thin fading dreams by day;
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi,
They had stolen my soul away!

## SONG

Lovely hill-torrents are
At cold winterfall;
Among the earth's silence, they
Stonily call.

Gone Autumn's pageantry;
Through woods all bare
With strange, locked voices
Shining they stare!

## THE ROBBER

The Trees were taller than the night,
And through my window square,
Earth-stupefied, great oranges
Drowsed in the leaf-carved air.

Into that tree-top crowded dream
A white arm stretched, and soon
Those green-gold oranges were plucked,
Were sucked pale by the Moon.

And white and still that robber lay
On the frail boughs asleep,
Eating the solid substance through
In silence clear and deep.

Suddenly he went, and then
The wood was dark as death:
Come back, O robber; robber, come;
These gray trees are but breath:

These gray trees are but breath, the Night
Is a wind-walled, dream-filled Hall!
But on the mirror of the air
The wood wreathed dark and tall.

No movement and no sound there was
Within that silent House.
Behind a cloud, the Robber laughed
In a mad white carouse.

## TALKING WITH SOLDIERS

The mind of the people is like mud,
From which arise strange and beautiful things,
But mud is none the less mud,
Though it bear orchids and prophesying Kings,
Dreams, trees, and water's bright babblings.

It has found form and color and light,
The cold glimmer of the ice-wrapped Poles;
It has called a far-off glow: Arcturus,
And some pale weeds: lilies of the valley.

It has imagined Virgil, Helen and Cassandra,
The sack of Troy, and the weeping for Hector—
Rearing stark up 'mid all this beauty
In the thick, dull neck of Ajax.

There is a dark Pine in Lapland,
And the great, figured Horn of the Reindeer
Moving soundlessly across the snow,
Is its twin brother, double-dreamed,
In the mind of a far-off people.

It is strange that a little mud
Should echo with sounds, syllables, and letters,
Should rise up and call a mountain Popocatapetl,
And a green-leafed wood Oleander.

These are the ghosts of invisible things;
There is no Lapland, no Helen and no Hector,
And the Reindeer is a darkening of the brain,
And Oleander is but oleander.

Mary Magdalena and the vine Lachryma Christi,
Were like ghosts up the ghost of Vesuvius,
As I sat and drank wine with the soldiers,
As I sat in the Inn on the mountain,
Watching the shadows in my mind.

The mind of the people is like mud:
Where are the imperishable things,
The ghosts that flicker in the brain—
Silent women, orchids, and prophesying Kings,
Dreams, trees, and water's bright babblings!

## THE MUSIC OF A TREE

Once, walking home, I passed beneath a Tree,
It filled the dark like stone statuary,
  It was so quiet and still,
  Its thick green leaves a hill
Of strange and faint earth-branching melody:

Over a wall it hung its leaf-starred wood,
And as I lonely there beneath it stood,
  In that sky-hollow street
  Where rang no human feet,
Sweet music flowed and filled me with its flood;

And all my weariness then fell away,
The houses were more lovely than by day;
The Moon and that old Tree
Sang there, and secretly,
With throbbing heart, tip-toe I stole away.

## T. P. CAMERON WILSON

"Tony" P. Cameron Wilson was born in South Devon in 1889 and was educated at Exeter and Oxford. He wrote one novel besides several articles under the pseudonym *Tipuca*, a euphonic combination of the first three initials of his name. Wilson's collected poems, *Magpies in Picardy*, published by The Poetry Bookshop, appeared posthumously in 1919.

When the War broke out he was a teacher in a school at Hindhead, Surrey, and, after many months of gruelling conflict, he was given a captaincy. He was killed in action by a machine-gun bullet March 23, 1918, at the age of 29. Though not one of whom a great future could have been predicted, his death was a distinct loss to the happy England he explored.

### SPORTSMEN IN PARADE

They left the fury of the fight,
And they were very tired.
The gates of Heaven were open quite,
Unguarded and unwired.
There was no sound of any gun,
The land was still and green;
Wide hills lay silent in the sun,
Blue valleys slept between.

They saw far-off a little wood
Stand up against the sky.
Knee-deep in grass a great tree stood;
Some lazy cows went by . . .
There were some rooks sailed overhead,
And once a church-bell pealed.
"*God! but it's England*," some one said,
"*And there's a cricket-field!*"

Viola Meynell, daughter of Alice Meynell (see page 193), has written but one volume of poetry, *Verses* (1919), but that small collection contains several highly individualized poems—"Jonah and the Whale" is typical—which compare favorably to those of her mother.

The subtle and metaphysical are not so apparent in her novels, of which there were eight by 1930. Both these qualities, however, intensify the short stories in *Young Mrs. Cruse* (1924).

## JONAH AND THE WHALE

He sported round the watery world.
His rich oil was a gloomy waveless lake
Within the waves. Affrighted seamen hurled
Their weapons in his foaming wake.

One old corroding iron he bore
Which journeyed through his flesh but yet had not
Found out his life. Another lance he wore
Outside him pricking in a tender spot.

So distant were his parts that they
Sent but a dull faint message to his brain.
He knew not his own flesh, as great kings may
Not know the farther places where they reign.

His play made storm in a calm sea;
His very kindness slew what he might touch;
And wrecks lay scattered on his anger's lee.
The Moon rocked to and fro his watery couch.

His hunger cleared the sea. And where
He passed, the ocean's edge lifted its brim.
He skimmed the dim sea-floor to find if there
Some garden had its harvest ripe for him.

But in his sluggish brain no thought
Ever arose. His law was instinct blind.
No thought or gleam or vision ever brought
Light to the dark of his old dreamless mind.

Until one day sudden and strange
Half-hints of knowledge burst upon his sight.
Glimpses he had of Time, and Space, and Change,
And something greater than his might;

And terror's leap to imagine sin;
And blinding Truth half-bare unto his seeing.
It was the living man who had come in . . .
Jonah's thoughts flying through his being.

## DOROTHY M. RICHARDSON

Dorothy M. Richardson (Mrs. Alan Odle), known chiefly as a novelist of extraordinary sensitivity, has allowed little of her verse to appear in print. Her chief work is a continued novel (*Pilgrimage*) divided into a series of books the first of which, *Pointed Roofs*, was published in 1915 and the ninth, *Oberland*, appeared in 1927. There is little plot, the idiom is not unusual; but life seen through the eyes of her chief character, Miriam Henderson, becomes vivid in its smallest commonplaces. In her use of introspection, time-shifting, and intensification of detail, she has undoubtedly influenced the more sensational work of James Joyce.

Up to the present no volume containing Dorothy Richardson's verse has been published.

### FREEDOM

There is no truth but mine to make me free.
And free I am, since my truth shows me bound.
Being is freedom, moving step by step
To sudden flight and falling.
Falling and flight again. Whatever moves
Is free, and all things move, led by their mystery.
The smallest step sets free to be aware
Of their soft breath when roses fill the air.

## CAMILLA DOYLE

Camilla Doyle was born at Cathedral Close, Norwich, where she has lived ever since. Besides being a writer, Miss Doyle is well

known as an artist and craftsman, having exhibited her paintings and furniture at various galleries.

Her *Poems* (1923) reveal the same sensitivity to line and motion as her drawings; even so tiny a sketch as "The Rabbit" has the faithful economy of a Japanese print, while "March" is a whimsical painting in the modern manner faintly suggestive of Edward Thomas.

### THE RABBIT

All day this spring—the first he's known—
He lets himself be sideways blown
When the wind comes; he'll leap and pounce,
And try to rush two ways at once,
On feet that catch the very sound
Cascades make spattering to the ground.
  Though men with difficulty sing how soon
    They die, how seldom living they can thrive,
  He makes a little dancing-tune
    By only being alive;
No leaf that April winds blow off the tree
Falls and leaps round again so gay as he.

### MARCH

Green triangles have come on the ground,
  Green fretted things that we shall see
Grown to wild parsley soon. The hens
  Are talking news excitedly.

Big dimples stay in the sparrows' fluff,
  They preen with such fine energy.
The very dust's alert. His songs
  The blackbird stirs from memory—

The prettiest one he knew last year
  Is still a soft uncertainty.
The catkins drip like honey spilt,
  The cock crows twice as frequently.

And the wind rises, tossing back
  The spring: "You'll like it more," says he,
"For twisting aside, like the blackbird's song,
  And vexing you with 'Presently.' "

### THE MOON

How like a beckoning finger shows
The fair young moon that lately rose—
As though she called her thirty days
With bright deluding promises.

The answering waves at night, that took
Her silver livery, leap to crook
Themselves into her form as well,
And sink in tears because they fail.

Who'ld think her beckoning finger were
A skeleton's, all white and bare?
For all her loveliness the moon
Is but a long-dead skeleton.

And if you doubt, all you that are
Fonder than waves of this bright star—
Wait but a little, at the full
We'll see her as a fleshless skull.

## MURIEL STUART

Muriel Stuart first attracted notice with "Christ at Carnival," a long poem which appeared in *The English Review* in 1915. This, later, became the title-poem of her first volume, published during the following year. More lyrical, however, are *The Cockpit of Idols and Other Poems* (1918) and *Poems* (1922), in both of which the verse suggests an imaginative strength beneath smooth contours.

### THE SEED SHOP

Here in a quiet and dusty room they lie,
Faded as crumbled stone or shifting sand,
Forlorn as ashes, shriveled, scentless, dry—
Meadows and gardens running through my hand.

Dead that shall quicken at the call of Spring,
Sleepers to stir beneath June's magic kiss,
Though birds pass over, unremembering,
And no bee seek here roses that were his.

In this brown husk, a dale of hawthorn dreams;
A cedar in this narrow cell is thrust
That will drink deeply of a century's streams.
These lilies shall make summer on my dust.

Here in their safe and simple house of death,
Sealed in their shells, a million roses leap;
Here I can blow a garden with my breath,
And in my hand a forest lies asleep.

### COMMON FIRES

The fern and flame had fought and died together,
From fading frond the falling smoke crept gray,
The heath drew close her old brown shawl of heather,
And turned her face away.

Today the bee no bell of honey misses,
The birds are nesting where the bracken lies
Green, tranquil, deep, quiet as dreams or kisses
On weary lips and eyes.

The heath has drawn the blackened threads together;
My heart has closed her lips upon old pain;
But somewhere in my heart and in the heather,
No bud shall grow again.

## FREDEGOND SHOVE

Fredegond Shove was nothing more than an unfamiliar but provocative name until the appearance of her group of four poems in the 1918-1919 issue of *Georgian Poetry*. Her own volume, *Dreams and Journeys* (1919), displays a richer command of imagery which, without straining for any novelty of utterance, is far removed from the traditional poetic jargon. Writing chiefly about simple things, she is able to invest her casual subjects with freshness. An anonymous critic in The Chapbook remarked, "Her poetry is like sunlight on a green hill. It is always the same sun and the same hill, but the imagination of the beholder sees it each time in a new and beautiful light."

Though she has only a few dozen poems, they are unlike the neat versifying indulged in by most of the so-facile women

of her day. Mrs. Shove is particularly successful in the world of half-lights; she makes the subliminal more real than realism.

### A MAN DREAMS HE IS THE CREATOR

I sat in heaven like the sun
  Above a storm when winter was:
I took the snowflakes one by one
  And turned their fragile shapes to glass:
I washed the rivers blue with rain
And made the meadows green again.

I took the birds and touched their springs,
  Until they sang unearthly joys:
They flew about on golden wings
  And glittered like an angel's toys:
I filled the fields with flowers' eyes,
As white as stars in Paradise.

And then I looked on man and knew
  Him still intent on death, still proud.
Whereat into a rage I flew
  And turned my body to a cloud:
In the dark shower of my soul
The star of earth was swallowed whole.

### THE WILLOW TREE

There is a willow tree
  Grows in the fountain's bed;
He has a sooty trunk,
  He has a grizzled head.

The wizened snowflakes find
  A shelter in his twigs
And at his knotted skull
  The last woodpecker digs.

### SOPS OF LIGHT

Stop still on the stair,
  (Draw in your breath):
Love is the whole air,
  There is no death:

Set the jug aside
  For beams to fill:
Peace is the housetide;
  Then be still.

Let the window stand
  Open to tree;
Light is the whole land
  And the whole sea:
The clocks in the house chime.
  O, the day's steep,
But the soul knows no time
  Nor any sleep.

## ROSE MACAULAY

Rose Macaulay, the daughter of G. C. Macaulay, late lecturer in English literature at Cambridge, is known chiefly through her novels and, through these, as a wit. Although she had written some six volumes before 1921, it was in that year, with the publication of *Dangerous Ages*, that she became known on both sides of the Atlantic. Her reputation as a satirist was enhanced by several subsequent novels, particularly by *Told by an Idiot* (1923) and *Keeping Up Appearances*, the American edition of which was entitled *Daisy and Daphne* (1928).

It is an entirely different author who is presented in *The Two Blind Countries* (1914) and *Three Days* (1919). This is not only a writer of verse, but a serious, almost a mystical if not always successful poet. In both volumes Miss Macaulay explores the limbo between consciousness and intuition. In this world between common knowledge and unlimited possibility she is courageously, and sometimes calmly, at home.

### MURDER

I

"Which road to the fen inn?" "You follow me,
And you'll find out before the moon gets up."
"How far to go? How long before we sup?"
"Why that, young man, will be as it will be."
"The dim downs heave and tumble like the sea;

The great wind raves like waves on a hidden shore;
The climbing moon flames red at the night's door—
She'll soon break in. . . . How near to bed are we?"
"A short way, a short way, impatient sir;
You shall sleep sound anon, and the moon's light
Shall wake you not, nor shall the shiver and stir
Of winds break in upon your quiet night. . . .
This is the inn; I am the inn-keeper;
I choked you a mile back, for greed and spite."

II

"Are you quite near? There was a sound of going,
And sudden alarm struck coldly through my dream."
"You heard the whispering run of the dark stream,
And the night wind through the gray willows blowing."
"Does the wind creep like furtive feet tiptoeing?"
"Yea, very like." "I dreamt of a dim rout
Of stealthy shades that quietly stole about. . . ."
"That was the murderous river flowing, flowing."
"Put out your hand. It's touch is cold on mine."
"Through the wide casement steals the chilling air."
"Your whispering voice sounds distant and malign:
Like grass on a dewy night is your strange hair. . . .
Speak, speak. . . ." "Peace, fool; he will not speak again.
I speak for him who has been an hour slain."

## THEODORE MAYNARD

Theodore Maynard was born November 3, 1890 at Madras, India, where his parents were missionaries. His early education was in England but he took his degree at Fordham University while teaching at its Graduate School. He came to America for the first time in 1909, intending to study for the Congregational ministry, but while supplying at a country church in Vermont preached a sermon which led to a call for his resignation. It was on fools; and the rustic congregation, suspecting personal implications, regarded it as heretical. Fortunately rebuffed in his ambition, Maynard returned to England in 1911, working his passage on a cattle-boat, and not long afterwards, (having become a Catholic) tested unsuccessfully his vocation to the

Dominican order. Seven months later he returned to the world, married, and took up journalism, writing for *The New Witness* under the editorship of the Chestertons and for other London periodicals. He came to the United States for the second time in 1920 to lecture, but remained to teach in California. In 1925 he moved to New York, and three years later was appointed head of the English Department at Georgetown University.

Maynard's first book, *Laughs and Whiffs of Song* (1915), was incorporated with two other small volumes and published in America as *Poems* in 1919. This collection, like *The Last Knight,* which followed it in 1920, was immature and imitative. Maynard, it is evident, had absorbed his influences but not gestated them. *Exile* (1928) is far better. The influence of Chesterton and less modern Catholic poets is not so apparent; Maynard's stanzas proceed from concepts and convictions which are his own.

In addition to his verse, Maynard has published a novel, two anthologies, and two collections of essays, one of which (*Our Best Poets,* 1922) is a partisan but provocative set of estimates.

## EXILE

Here where the season swiftly turns
Its great wheel forward while there burns
  Red in the redwood trees:
And while the eucalyptus climbs
Above the palm trees and the limes
  By Californian seas,

I think of England—and there wakes
Pain like wild roses in her brakes,
  A pain as dear as they,
That digs its roots in English earth,
And brings an English flower to birth
  Six thousand miles away.

The Downs are standing hugely drawn
Magnificent against the dawn,
  Deep black against the sky.
The first cock crows; the light leaps higher;
The Channel is a flood of fire
  And crimson suddenly.

And London, moving in her bed,
Hears on the eaves above her head
The earlier sparrows stir.
A thin mist rises and the dew
Is thick on Hampstead and at Kew—
The dawn has greeted her.

I ache in memory, yet I know
That if I ever homeward go
I shall not ever find
In England's gentle tenderness
The rest I seek for which can bless
My tired, unquiet mind.

For though I wander through all lands,
Seeking a house not built with hands
For my eternal home,
No city in this world of men
Can claim me as a citizen
From Babylon to Rome.

Not even London, where I burned
With bliss because in her I learned
My faith, my love, my art;
Not even London, where I trod
Through crowded streets alone with God,
And anguish in my heart;

Not even London, though she stands
To me with priestly praying hands
In every dome and spire,
Can be the city of my quest,
Of infinite and final rest,
The end of all desire.

But London, London has become
A heavenly symbol and the sum
Of all the world can give.
And English air that was my breath
Remains my mortal life, till death
Shall set me free to live.

The apple tree's an apple still
Here or upon an English hill;
  The moon among the boughs
Is the same moon, although it went
O'er ghostly orchards far in Kent
  When noon shone on my house.

But ah! some change had come to it
Beyond my exegetic wit:
  I know not what it was;
Not as the sailor on the spars
Among the Australasian stars
  Beholds the Southern Cross—

This map of heaven I know by rote.
But something struggles at my throat:
  And stirs my secret blood,
While a vague light, unearthly, strange
Glows through the lineaments of change
  On field and hill and wood.

The Roman poplars in their lines
Like Roman soldiers, Roman vines—
  These I had known of old.
And here in evidence the plain
And iron intellect of Spain,
  Her fury hot and cold.

But these are exiles, too, whose need
Has clung and stiffened round the Creed
  Which made them clear and strong.
Though far from Europe, here they keep
Her name remembered in their sleep,
  And in their classic song.

The apple tree remembers how
The blossoms burgeoned on her bough
  By little English streams;
And how the cider-drinking men
Were mighty with the sword and pen,
  And mightiest in their dreams.

The poplar and the olive know
How like an arrow from a bow
  The Roman road was shot;
How Roman law and Roman Pope
Brought order and outrageous hope
  To men who had them not.

. . . . .

The giant masonry shall pass,
The palaces be mounds of grass—
  And yet not all in vain
That energy of brain and bone,
Though no stone on another stone
  Shall ever stand again.

I well may join the cry with them,
"If I forget Jerusalem . . ."
  I who shall not forget
My holy city, made more fair
By distance and the alien air
  Wherein my life is set.

If London come to empty loss,
And jackals wail at Charing Cross;
  And if at Westminster
The lizards crawl about each niche,
And she be poor who once was rich—
  I shall remember her.

For now I know with what in mind
The Abbey windows were designed,
  Her pavements were laid down;
And how her streets were meant to go
Beyond the steeple bells of Bow
  To the celestial Town.

And so beside the Golden Gate
A gate of purer gold I wait,
  A more resplendent wall
Than London's—daring now to lift
My voice to praise God's bitter gift,
  Exile, the best of all.

## THE WORLD'S MISER

I

A miser with an eager face
Sees that each roseleaf is in place.

He keeps beneath strong bolts and bars
The piercing beauty of the stars.

The colors of the dying day
He hoards as treasure—well He may!—

And saves with care (lest they be lost)
The dainty diagrams of frost.

He counts the hairs of every head,
And grieves to see a sparrow dead.

II

Among the yellow primroses
He holds His summer palaces,

And sets the grass about them all
To guard them as His spearmen small.

He fixes on each wayside stone
A mark to show it as His Own,

And knows when raindrops fall through air
Whether each single one be there,

That gathered into ponds and brooks
They may become His picture-books,

To shew in every spot and place
The living glory of His face.

## ISAAC ROSENBERG

Isaac Rosenberg was born at Bristol on November 25, 1890. At the age of seven his parents brought him to London; at four-

teen he was compelled to leave school and work for his living. Later some friends interested themselves in the boy who had begun to show great talent as a writer and draftsman, and made it possible for the young Jew from the East End to attend the Slade School. After three years of art schooling, during which Rosenberg won prizes as well as praise, ill health forced him to leave England. In 1914, he went to South Africa, having a married sister in Capetown. It was there that he definitely decided to become a poet. He attempted to support himself by writing and lecturing, but his efforts were without success and, in less than a year, he was back in London. War had broken out. Sick and unhappy, Rosenberg enlisted in 1915. Early in 1916, he was sent to France, totally unfitted for military life. Nevertheless, his endurance was amazing; he hated war with all the force of his keen mind and disabled body, but he never whined. He was killed in action on April 1, 1918.

As a poet, Rosenberg is greater in promise than achievement. Most of the privately printed *Night and Day* (1912), although published at the age of twenty-two, was written in his 'teens. Even the succeeding *Youth* (1915) suffers from verbal awkwardness; a fear of falling into weak writing led him to complicate his images until they are, for the most part, turgid and overburdened. But in *Moses* (1916), and in the posthumous war-poems, the passionate young poet speaks in his own half-savage voice. Here and there, a passage suggests Abercrombie, whom Rosenberg admired greatly; but the images are so fiercely fresh, the accent so personal, that there is no mistaking the strength and originality of Rosenberg's gift.

Rosenberg's three small books, as well as a quantity of uncollected verse including an unfinished play, were published in one volume, *Poems*, in 1922. Not the least remarkable feature of this unusual collection is the fact that the contents were selected and edited by Gordon Bottomley and the introductory memoir was supplied by Laurence Binyon.

### THE ONE LOST

I mingle with your bones;
You steal in subtle noose
This lighted dust Jehovah loans
And now I lose.

What will the Lender say
When I shall not be found,
Safe-sheltered at the Judgment Day,
Being in you bound?

He'll hunt through wards of Heaven,
Call to uncoffined earth,
"Where is this soul, unjudged, not given
Dole for good's dearth?"

And I, lying so safe
Within you, hearing all,
To have cheated God shall laugh,
Freed by your thrall.

## THE JEW

Moses, from whose loins I sprung,
Lit by a lamp in his blood
Ten immutable rules, a moon
For mutable lampless men.

The blond, the bronze, the ruddy,
With the same heaving blood,
Keep tide to the moon of Moses.
Then why do they sneer at me?

## THE DEAD HEROES

Flame out, you glorious skies,
Welcome our brave;
Kiss their exultant eyes;
Give what they gave.

Flash, mailèd seraphim,
Your burning spears;
New days to outflame their dim
Heroic years.

Thrills their baptismal tread
The bright proud air;
The embattled plumes outspread
Burn upwards there.

Flame out, flame out, O Song!
Star, ring to star!
Strong as our hurt is strong,
Our children are.

Their blood is England's heart;
By their dead hands,
It is their noble part
That England stands.

England—Time gave them thee;
They gave back this
To win Eternity
And claim God's kiss.

## FRANCIS LEDWIDGE

Francis Ledwidge was born in Slane, County Meath, Ireland, in 1891. His brief life was fitful and uncertain. He was, at various times, a miner, a grocer's clerk, a farmer, a scavenger, an experimenter in hypnotism, and, at the end, a soldier. He served as a lance-corporal on the Flanders front and was killed in July, 1917, at the age of 26 years.

Ledwidge's poetry is rich in nature-drawing; his lines palpitate with a thin but romantic charm. Obviously influenced by the sensuous imagery of Keats, his twilight-colored verse is unaffectedly melodious. He was—as is obvious by his choice of titles—fondest of dim hours and evening clouds in some "blue corner off the moon's highway."

Discovered and sponsored by Lord Dunsany, Ledwidge published two volumes during his lifetime: *Songs of the Fields* (1914) and *Songs of Peace* (1916). Both books (as well as the posthumous *Last Songs*) were incorporated in *Complete Poems* (1919).

### AN EVENING IN ENGLAND

From its blue vase the rose of evening drops;
Upon the streams its petals float away.
The hills all blue with distance hide their tops
In the dim silence falling on the gray.
A little wind said "Hush!" and shook a spray
Heavy with May's white crop of opening bloom;
A silent bat went dipping in the gloom.

Night tells her rosary of stars full soon,
They drop from out her dark hand to her knees.
Upon a silhouette of woods, the moon
Leans on one horn as if beseeching ease

From all her changes which have stirred the seas.
Across the ears of Toil, Rest throws her veil.
I and a marsh bird only make a wail.

## EVENING CLOUDS

A little flock of clouds go down to rest
In some blue corner off the moon's highway,
With shepherd-winds that shook them in the West
To borrowed shapes of earth, in bright array,
Perhaps to weave a rainbow's gay festoons
Around the lonesome isle which Brooke has made
A little England full of lovely noons,
Or dot it with his country's mountain shade.

Ah, little wanderers, when you reach that isle [1]
Tell him, with dripping dew, they have not failed,
What he loved most; for late I roamed a while
Thro' English fields and down her rivers sailed;
And they remember him with beauty caught
From old desires of Oriental Spring
Heard in his heart with singing overwrought;
And still on Purley Common gooseboys sing.

## THE WIFE OF LLEW

And Gwydion said to Math, when it was Spring:
"Come now and let us make a wife for Llew."
And so they broke broad boughs yet moist with dew,
And in a shadow made a magic ring:
They took the violet and the meadow-sweet
To form her pretty face, and for her feet
They built a mound of daisies on a wing,
And for her voice they made a linnet sing
In the wide poppy blowing for her mouth.
And over all they chanted twenty hours.
And Llew came singing from the azure south
And bore away his wife of birds and flowers.

[1] The island of Skyros where Rupert Brooke was buried.

### A RAINY DAY IN APRIL

When the clouds shake their hyssops, and the rain
Like holy water falls upon the plain,
'Tis sweet to gaze upon the springing grain
And see your harvest born.

And sweet the little breeze of melody
The blackbird puffs upon the budding tree,
While the wild poppy lights upon the lea
And blazes 'mid the corn.

The skylark soars the freshening shower to hail,
And the meek daisy holds aloft her pail,
And Spring all radiant by the wayside pale
Sets up her rock and reel.

See how she weaves her mantle fold on fold,
Hemming the woods and carpeting the wold.
Her warp is of the green, her woof the gold,
The spinning world her wheel.

### EVENING IN FEBRUARY

The windy evening drops a gray
Old eyelid down across the sun;
The last crow leaves the plowman's way,
And happy lambs make no more fun.

Wild parsley buds beside my feet,
A doubtful thrush makes hurried tune,
The steeple in the village street
Now seems to pierce the twilight moon.

I hear and see these changing charms,
For all my thoughts are fixed upon
The hurry and the loud alarms
Before the fall of Babylon.

## IRENE RUTHERFORD McLEOD

Irene Rutherford McLeod, born August 21, 1891, has written three volumes of direct if not distinguished verse, the surest of

which may be found in *Songs to Save a Soul* (1915) and *Before Dawn* (1918). The latter volume is dedicated to A. de Sélincourt, to whom she was married in 1919.

*Towards Love* (1923) has less quality. The author allows her emotions to flow too easily into molds infirm from overuse. If the old vessels are to be used they must be filled with new wine. Miss McLeod's first distillation remains her best.

### "IS LOVE, THEN, SO SIMPLE"

Is love, then, so simple, my dear?
The opening of a door,
And seeing all things clear?
I did not know before.

I had thought it unrest and desire
Soaring only to fall,
Annihilation and fire:
It is not so at all.

I feel no desperate will,
But I think I understand
Many things, as I sit quite still,
With Eternity in my hand.

### LONE DOG

I'm a lean dog, a keen dog, a wild dog, and lone;
I'm a rough dog, a tough dog, hunting on my own;
I'm a bad dog, a mad dog, teasing silly sheep;
I love to sit and bay the moon, to keep fat souls from sleep.

I'll never be a lap dog, licking dirty feet,
A sleek dog, a meek dog, cringing for my meat,
Not for me the fireside, the well-filled plate,
But shut door, and sharp stone, and cuff and kick, and hate.

Not for me the other dogs, running by my side,
Some have run a short while, but none of them would bide.
Oh, mine is still the lone trail, the hard trail, the best,
Wide wind, and wild stars, and hunger of the quest!

Francis Meynell, the son of Alice and Wilfrid Meynell, was born in 1891. He was, he says, "fattened up to be a poet, but early decided better to print other people's good poems well than to have his own bad poems printed at all." After working as printer, journalist and politician, he founded The Nonesuch Press in 1923. Since that time the Press under his direction has brought out more than a hundred books of enduring literary value, flawless in all the details—typography, editing, choice of paper, binding and general composition—which go to make the perfect book.

Although he is better known as a master-printer, he has, Meynell himself to the contrary, published several excellent verses. His literary talents also found expression in the editing of George Herbert's *The Temple* (1927) and Thomas Beedome's *Select Poems* (1928), as well as in the authorship of *The Typography of Newspaper Advertisements* (1929).

## MAN AND BEAST

I am less patient than this horse
And it is fleeter far than I.
Its hair is silky, mine is coarse;
Grasses have shaped that larger eye,
While to feed me live things must die.

The birds make little darts in air,
And fishes little darts in water,
Old sheep a silver glory share,
Peacocks are peacocks everywhere . . .
Man lies awake, planning the slaughter.

What woman has this old cat's graces?
What boy can sing as the thrush sings?
For me, I'd rather not run races
With dragon-flies, nor thread the mazes
Of a smooth lawn with ants and things.

Yet horse and sheep tread leaf and stem
And bud and flower beneath their feet;
They sniff at Stars-of-Bethlehem
And buttercups are food to them—
No more than bitter food or sweet.

I, to whom air and waves are sealed,
I yet possess the human part.
O better beasts, you now must yield!
I name the cool stars of the field,
I have the flowers of heaven by heart.

## PERMANENCE

There is no power to change
  One act, one word.
We move in time: these range
  Immortal. I have heard

Egypt and her Antony,
  With their love first fulfilled
Cry out, and again cry—
  Nor ever are they stilled.

And Sheba I have seen
  Bare for her love her breast.
The silken Lesbian queen
  Leaves nothing unconfest.

Unspaced, untimed, held fast
  Are all things done or undone.
Eternity knows no haste—
  In Babylon, or London.

Though they have never moved
  These hundred hundred years,
Their rhythm when they loved
  Lives ever, and their tears.

When your love's flight shall falter,
  Shall fall like a wounded bird,
You too cannot alter
  The said or the unsaid word.

O passion of wisdom, this
  (Helen held it for such):
You cannot unkiss that kiss,
  You cannot untouch that touch.

Richard Aldington was born in England in 1892, and educated at Dover College and London University. His first poems were published in England in 1909; *Images Old and New* appeared in 1915. Aldington and "H. D." (the chief American Imagist) are conceded to be two of the foremost Imagist poets; their sensitive and clean-cut lines put to shame their scores of imitators. Both appeared, with four others, under Amy Lowell's *Aegis* in the three issues of *Some Imagist Poets.*

Aldington's *War and Love* (1918) is somewhat more regular in pattern; the poems in this latter volume are less consciously programmatic but more searching. Recently, Aldington, in common with most of the *vers libristes,* has been writing in regular rhythms and fixed forms. *Images of Desire* (1919) was followed by *Exile and Other Poems* (1923) which contains whole sections of surprisingly archaic, pseudo-Elizabethan songs. *A Fool i' the Forest* (1925) is a return to Aldington's earlier manner with the addition of foreign dissonances. Though the influence of Eliot is obvious, this phantasmagoria is in many ways Aldington's most important work. Juxtaposing classic calm with the incongruities of a mechanical civilization, Aldington projects an agony unrelated to either ancient or modern backgrounds. This agony was amplified in Aldington's first novel, *Death of a Hero* (1929), a novel dealing with three generations, beginning in the snug little England of the Victorian Nineties; a work kaleidoscopic in effect and, as might be imagined, rich in music variety. His *Collected Poems* were published in 1928.

Critics differ concerning Aldington's position as a poet; none disputes his eminence as a translator. Among his many translations (of which more than twenty were published prior to 1929) are *The Poems of Anyte of Tegea, The Poems of Meleager,* Cyrano de Bergerac's *Voyages to the Moon and the Sun, Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great.* He is also the editor and translator of *Latin Poems of the Renaissance, Eighteenth Century French Literature* and *Fifty Romance Lyric Poems.*

## IMAGES

### I

Like a gondola of green scented fruits
Drifting along the dank canals of Venice,
You, O exquisite one,
Have entered into my desolate city.

II

The blue smoke leaps
Like swirling clouds of birds vanishing.
So my love leaps forth toward you,
Vanishes and is renewed.

III

A rose-yellow moon in a pale sky
When the sunset is faint vermilion
In the mist among the tree-boughs
Art thou to me, my beloved.

IV

A young beech tree on the edge of the forest
Stands still in the evening,
Yet shudders through all its leaves in the light air
And seems to fear the stars—
So are you still and so tremble.

V

The red deer are high on the mountain,
They are beyond the last pine trees.
And my desires have run with them.

VI

The flower which the wind has shaken
Is soon filled again with rain;
So does my heart fill slowly with tears,
O Foam-Driver, Wind-of-the-Vineyards,
Until you return.

## THE FAUN SEES SNOW FOR THE FIRST TIME

Zeus,
Brazen thunder-hurler,
Cloud-whirler, son-of-Kronos,

Send vengeance on these Oreads
Who strew
White frozen flecks of mist and cloud
Over the brown trees and the tufted grass
Of the meadows, where the stream
Runs black through shining banks
Of bluish white.

Zeus,
Are the halls of heaven broken up
That you flake down upon me
Feather-strips of marble?

Dis and Styx!
When I stamp my hoof
The frozen-cloud specks jam into the cleft
So that I reel upon two slippery points. . . .

Fool, to stand here cursing
When I might be running!

## AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

I turn the page and read:
"I dream of silent verses where the rhyme
Glides noiseless as an oar."

The heavy musty air, the black desks,
The bent heads and rustling noises
In the great dome
Vanish . . .
And
The sun hangs in the cobalt-blue sky,
The boat drifts over the lake shallows,
The fishes skim like umber shadows
through undulating weeds,
The oleanders drop their rosy
petals on the lawns,
And the swallows dive and swirl and whistle
About the cleft battlements of Can Grande's castle. . . .

## VICARIOUS ATONEMENT

This is an old and very cruel god. . . .

We will endure;
We will try not to wince
When he crushes and rends us.

If indeed it is for your sakes,
If we perish or moan in torture,
Or stagger under sordid burdens
That you may live—
Then we can endure.

If our wasted blood
Makes bright the page
Of poets yet to be;
If this our tortured life
Save from destruction's nails
Gold words of a Greek long dead;
Then we can endure,
Then hope,
Then watch the sun rise
Without utter bitterness.

But, O thou old and very cruel god,
Take if thou canst this bitter cup from us.

## EVENING

The chimneys, rank on rank,
Cut the clear sky;
The moon,
With a rag of gauze about her loins
Poses among them, an awkward Venus—

And here am I looking wantonly at her
Over the kitchen sink.

### AFTER TWO YEARS

She is all so slight
And tender and white
  As a May morning.
She walks without hood
At dusk. It is good
  To hear her sing.

It is God's will
That I shall love her still
  As he loves Mary,
And night and day
I will go forth to pray
  That she love me.

She is as gold
Lovely, and far more cold.
  Do thou pray with me,
For if I win grace
To kiss twice her face
  God has done well to me.

## EDWARD SHANKS

Edward (Buxton) Shanks was born in London in 1892 and educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. He has reviewed verse and *belles-lettres* for several years for various English publications, and is an assistant editor of *The London Mercury*. He was the first winner of the Hawthornden Prize for imaginative literature in 1919; his *The Queen of China and Other Poems* appearing in the same year. Since that volume, he has published *People of the Ruins* (1920) and *The Island of Youth* (1921).

Shanks has written several studies and two series of *Essays on Literature* (1923 and 1927). His *Collected Poems* were printed in 1926.

### COMPLAINT

When in the mines of dark and silent thought
Sometimes I delve and find strange fancies there,
With heavy labor to the surface brought
That lie and mock me in the brighter air,

Poor ores from starvèd lodes of poverty,
Unfit for working or to be refined,
That in the darkness cheat the miner's eye,
I turn away from that base cave, the mind.
Yet had I but the power to crush the stone
There are strange metals hid in flakes therein,
Each flake a spark sole-hidden and alone,
That only cunning, toilsome chemists win.
All this I know, and yet my chemistry
Fails and the pregnant treasures useless lie.

## STELLA BENSON

Stella Benson was born in 1892 at Much Wenlock in Shropshire, her father being "a sort of squire down there," but, as she was a delicate child, she spent most of her girlhood in Switzerland and Southern France. After doing social work during the War, she paid her first visit to America in 1918. Ordered to a warm climate by her physician, she came to California and, having no funds, tried to support herself in San Francisco as lady's maid, bill-collector and book-agent, but without success in any of these capacities. Later, she did tutoring at the University of California, returned to England by way of China, where she taught Chinese boys in an English church school, and during her travels in the Orient met her husband, J. C. O'Gorman Anderson.

Stella Benson is generally known as a novelist of piquant charm. Her volume of verse, *Twenty* (1918), reveals more of herself than her more voluminous prose; it has all the insouciance of *I Pose* (1915), the delicacy of *The Poor Man* (1920) and the finesse of *Pipers and a Dancer* (1924).

### WORDS

O words, O words, and shall you rule
The world? What is it but the tongue
That doth proclaim a man a fool,
So that his best songs go unsung,
So that his dreams are sent to school
And all die young.

There pass the traveling dreams, and these
My soul adores—my words condemn—
Oh, I would fall upon my knees
To kiss their golden garments' hem,
Yet words do lie in wait to seize
And murder them.

Tonight the swinging stars shall plumb
The silence of the sky. And herds
Of plumèd winds like huntsmen come
To hunt with dreams the restless birds.
Tonight the moon shall strike you dumb,
O words, O words. . . .

## FIVE SMOOTH STONES

It was young David, lord of sheep and cattle,
Pursued his fate, the April fields among,
Singing a song of solitary battle,
A loud mad song, for he was very young.

Vivid the air—and something more than vivid,—
Tall clouds were in the sky—and something more,—
The light horizon of the spring was livid
With a steel smile that showed the teeth of war.

It was young David mocked the Philistine.
It was young David laughed beside the river.
There came his mother—his and yours and mine—
With five smooth stones, and dropped them in his quiver

You never saw so green-and-gold a fairy.
You never saw such very April eyes.
She sang him sorrow's song to make him wary.
She gave him five smooth stones to make him wise.

*The first stone is love, and that shall fail you.*
*The second stone is hate, and that shall fail you.*
*The third stone is knowledge, and that shall fail you.*
*The fourth stone is prayer, and that shall fail you.*
*The fifth stone shall not fail you.*

For what is love, O lovers of my tribe?
And what is love, O women of my day?
Love is a farthing piece, a bloody bribe
Pressed in the palm of God—and thrown away.

And what is hate, O fierce and unforgiving?
And what shall hate achieve, when all is said?
A silly joke that cannot reach the living,
A spitting in the faces of the dead.

And what is knowledge, O young man who tasted
The reddest fruit on that forbidden tree?
Knowledge is but a painful effort wasted,
A bitter drowning in a bitter sea.

And what is prayer, O waiters for the answer?
And what is prayer, O seekers of the cause?
Prayer is the weary soul of Herod's dancer,
Dancing before blind kings without applause.

The fifth stone is a magic stone, my David,
Made up of fear and failure, lies and loss.
Its heart is lead, and on its face is gravèd
A crooked cross, my son, a crooked cross.

It has no dignity to lend it value;
No purity—alas, it bears a stain.
You shall not give it gratitude, nor shall you
Recall it all your days, except with pain.

Oh, bless your blindness, glory in your groping!
Mock at your betters with an upward chin!
And when the moment has gone by for hoping,
Sling your fifth stone, O son of mine, and win.

Grief do I give you, grief and dreadful laughter;
Sackcloth for banner, ashes in your wine.
Go forth, go forth, nor ask me what comes after;
The fifth stone shall not fail you, son of mine.

*Go forth, go forth, and slay the Philistine.*

V(ictoria) Sackville-West, daughter of Baron Sackville of Knole Park, was born in 1892. Her ancestral home figures prominently in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* (1928). *Orlando*, that time-dissolving tour de force, is in fact an elaborate fantasia—half poem, half parody—on the Sackvilles with Victoria Sackville-West (to whom the book is dedicated) scarcely disguised as the hero-heroine. The "plot" of Virginia Woolf's fiction, with its magical telescoping of periods, places and passions, seems to be suggested by one of the interludes in Miss Sackville-West's *The Land*, a passage ending:

> Perilla, fly! Corinna, stay!
> In deserts of Bohemia,
> A wood near Athens, or the wood
> Where these grown oaks as saplings stood
> Three hundred English years gone by,
> "And yet I love her till I die."

V. Sackville-West has become well known in three capacities: as the wife of the critic and diplomat, Harold Nicolson, as a novelist, as a poet. It was as a poet that she began, with *Poems of West and East* (1917). The volume failed to attract attention and she turned to prose, publishing four novels and two volumes of short stories between 1919 and 1924. Of these *The Heir* (1922) received the greatest commendation.

It was not until 1926 that her reputation as a poet was established. In that year she published *The Land* which was awarded the Hawthornden Prize in 1927. *The Land* is a long tribute to the English countryside, interspersed with lyrics. The movement is slow; there is no narrative; the scheme is no more original than Thomson's *The Seasons*. But while there is no novelty of theme or technique, there is an utterance so sincere, a rapport with her material so intense, that they produce a keen if quiet rapture. Here, without pomp, is something close to profundity.

> The country habit has me by the heart,
> For he's bewitched forever who has seen,
> Not with his eyes but with his vision, Spring
> Flow down the woods and stipple leaves with sun,
> As each man knows the life that fits him best,
> The shape it makes in his soul, the tune, the tone . . .

This is a poetry that speaks for itself more clearly than any résumé. Whether Miss Sackville-West writes about the sowing of crops, orchards, cider-making, sheep-shearing, wood-flowers, or weeds, she knows, "as each man knows the life that fits him best

the tone which fits the changing look of spring or winter landscapes. Truly the country habit has her by the heart.

### WEED MONTH

(*From "The Land"*)

This is the month of weeds.
Kex, charlock, thistle,
Among the shorn bristle
Of stubble drop seeds.
This is the month of weeds.

Spurry, pimpernel, quitch,
Twine in the stubble,
Making for trouble;
With nettle in ditch,
Spurry, pimpernel, quitch.

Yet the field has a friend,
The nimble clover,
Custodian, lover,
Yare to defend.
The field has a friend.

Humble-bees boldly reach
Red clover's honey,
Paid in sweet money.
Hives-bees in vain beseech:
Honey is out of reach.

Now let the clover spread;
Nature it craveth;
Foemen it braveth,
Strangling them dead.
So let the clover spread.

## WINTER SONG

(*From "The Land"*)

Many have sung the summer's songs,
Many have sung the corn,
Many have sung white blossom too
That stars the naked thorn—
That stars the black and naked thorn
Against the chalky blue.

But I, crouched up beside the hearth,
Will sing the red and gray;
Red going-down of sun behind
Clubbed woods of winter's day;
Of winter's short and hodden [1] day
That seals the sober hind:

Seals him sagacious through the year
Since winter comes again:
Since harvest's but another toil
And sorrow through the grain
Mounts up, through swathes of ripest grain
The sorrow of the soil.

No lightness is there at their heart,
No joy in country folk;
Only a patience slow and grave
Beneath their labor's yoke,—
Beneath the earth's compelling yoke
That only serves its slave,

Since countryman forever holds
The winter's memory,
When he, before the planets' fires
Have faded from the sky,
From black, resplendent winter sky
Must go about his byres; [2]

[1] Hodden = rustic-coarse, gray.
[2] Byres = buildings, literally cow-sheds.

And whether to the reaper's whirr
That scythes the falling crops,
He travels round the widening wake
Between the corn and copse,
The stubble wake 'twixt corn and copse
Where gleaners ply the rake,

Or whether in his granary loft
He pours the winnowed sacks,
Or whether in his yard he routs
The vermin from the stacks,
The vermin from the staddled [1] stacks
With staves and stones and shouts,

Still, still through all the molten eves
Whether he reaps or hones,
Or counts the guerdon of his sweat,
Still to his inward bones,
His ancient, sage, sardonic bones,
The winter haunts him yet.

Winter and toil reward him still
While he his course shall go
According to his proven worth,
Until his faith shall know
The ultimate justice and the slow
Compassion of the earth.

## OSBERT SITWELL

Osbert Sitwell (son of Sir George Sitwell and brother of Sacheverell and Edith Sitwell) was born in London, December 6, 1892, was educated at Eton, and became an officer in the Grenadier Guards, with whom he served in France for various periods from 1914 to 1917. After contesting the 1918 election at Scarborough in the Liberal interests, he devoted himself entirely to literature.

His first contributions appeared in *Wheels* (an annual anthology of a few of the younger radical writers, edited by his sister) and

[1] Staddled = upheld, supported.

disclosed an ironic and individual touch. That impression was strengthened by *Argonaut and Juggernaut* (1920), where Sitwell's cleverness and satire are intensified if not fused. His most remarkable though least brilliant poems are his irregular and fiery protests against smugness and hypocrisy. But Osbert Sitwell's more conventional poetry has a freshness of movement and definiteness of outline.

*Out of the Flame* (1923) reënforces this judgment. It is in two parts; a contrast, not a combination. There is the world of idea beauty which the poet loves and the world of idle luxury which rouses his satirical hate. In spite of a certain wildness of aim Sitwell rarely misses his mark.

For several years after 1923 this author distinguished himself in prose, registering a deep impression with the short stories in *Triple Fugue* (1924) and the novel *Before the Bombardment* (1926). *The Man Who Lost Himself* (1929) is the largest of his prose works; here he seems to shed all but the last drop of his spleen and has accomplished a fancifully philosophic tale in which poetry is instinct.

His subsequent volume of poetry presented him in a new and simpler vein. Sharing the nostalgia of his sister, Edith, he also returns to his childhood for much of the material in *England Reclaimed: A Book of Eclogues* (1927). Satire is still here, but it is satire softened with sympathy; if he laughs at such rustic figures as Mr. Goodbeare and Moping Fred, he smiles with Mr. and Mrs Nutch, the Southerns, the gamekeepers, gardeners and the homely gentles of the countryside. The author aims at "recording a broad panorama, essentially English, but which seems now, by force of circumstance, to be slipping away into the past." He has succeeded by creating an atmosphere in which the landscape is alive and in which recollection is newly shaped by the imagination.

### THE BLIND PEDDLER

I stand alone through each long day
Upon these pavers; cannot see
The wares spread out upon this tray
—For God has taken sight from me!

Many a time I've cursed the night
When I was born. My peering eyes
Have sought for but one ray of light
To pierce the darkness. When the skies

Rain down their first sweet April showers
On budding branches; when the morn
Is sweet with breath of spring and flowers,
I've cursed the night when I was born.

But now I thank God, and am glad
For what I cannot see this day
—The young men cripples, old, and sad,
With faces burnt and torn away;

Or those who, growing rich and old,
Have battened on the slaughter,
Whose faces, gorged with blood and gold,
Are creased in purple laughter!

## FOUNTAINS[1]

Proud fountains, wave your plumes,
Spread out your phoenix-wing,
Let the tired trees rejoice
Beneath your blossoming
(Tired trees, you whisper low).

High up, high up, above
These green and drooping sails,
A fluttering young wind
Hovers and dives, but fails
To steal a foaming feather.

Sail, like a crystal ship,
Above your sea of glass;
Then, with your quickening touch,
Transmute the things that pass
(Come down, cool wind, come down).

All humble things proclaim,
Within your magic net,
Their kinship to the Gods.
More strange and lovely yet
All lovely things become.

[1] Compare the poem on the same subject on page 741.

Dead, sculptured stone assumes
The life, from which it came;
The kingfisher is now
A moving tongue of flame,
A blue, live tongue of flame—

While birds, less proud of wing,
Crouch, in wind-ruffled shade,
Hide shyly, then pour out
Their jealous serenade;
. . . Close now your golden wings!

## ELEGY FOR MR. GOODBEARE

Do you remember Mr. Goodbeare, the carpenter,
Godfearing and bearded Mr. Goodbeare,
Who worked all day
At his carpenter's tray,
Do you remember Mr. Goodbeare?
Mr. Goodbeare, that Golconda of gleaming fable,
Lived, thin-ground between orchard and stable,
Pressed thus close against Alfred, his rival—
Mr. Goodbeare, who had never been away.

Do you remember Mr. Goodbeare,
Mr. Goodbeare, who never touched a cup?
Do you remember Mr. Goodbeare,
Who remembered a lot?
Mr. Goodbeare could remember
When things were properly kept up:
Mr. Goodbeare could remember
The christening and the coming-of-age:
Mr. Goodbeare could remember
The entire and roasted ox:
Mr. Goodbeare could remember
When the horses filled the stable,
And the port-wine-colored gentry rode after the tawny fox:
Mr. Goodbeare could remember
The old lady in her eagle rage,
Which knew no bounds:
Mr. Goodbeare could remember

When the escaped and hungering tiger
Flickered lithe and fierce through Foxton Wood,
When old Sir Nigel took his red-tongued, clamoring hounds,
And hunted it then and there,
As a Gentleman Should.

Do you remember Mr. Goodbeare,
Mr. Goodbeare who never forgot?
Do you remember Mr. Goodbeare,
That wrinkled and golden apricot,
Dear, bearded, godfearing Mr. Goodbeare
Who remembered remembering such a lot?

Oh, do you remember, do you remember,
As I remember and deplore,
That day in drear and far-away December
When dear, godfearing, bearded Mr. Goodbeare
Could remember
No more?

## F. V. BRANFORD

Frederick Victor Branford was born in 1892 in London and, as a child, moved to Scotland where his family had been for generations. He was educated at Edinburgh and Leyden Universities, served in the Air Force during the War, and went to live in the North of Scotland after 1918, recovering from disablement received in service.

His two volumes, *Titans and Gods* (1922) and *The White Stallion* (1924), vibrate with intensity. Related to no particular group, Branford is a passionately intellectual poet. Or rather, his art is the emotional apprehension of the beauty inherent in intellectual nature. His emotion, partly philosophic, partly metaphysical, leads him to compose long cantatas, odes based on theses which in themselves are difficult to follow. But his shorter poems are no more complicated than those of any poet who, like Francis Thompson, sees the image behind reality.

### ANY DAISY[1]

I address
Her Mightiness
In fear.

[1] Compare the poem on the same theme on page 194.

Nor have forgot
That she is not
More near,

Nor more far
Than any star
To me;

Then am I
Afraid, and cry
For Thee.

"Lord! Be kind,
For I am blind
With shame.

"Lord, is this
A flower or is
She flame?"

## SECRET TREATIES

We thought to find a cross like Calvary's,
And queened proud England with a diadem
Of thorns. Impetuous armies clamoring
For war, from the far utterance of the seas
We sprang, to win a new Jerusalem.
Now is our shame, for we have seen you fling
Full-sounding honor from your lips like phlegm
And bargain up our soul in felonies.
O England, it were better men should read,
In dusty chronicles, of how a death
Had found thee in the van of these crusades;
To tell their eager sons with bated breath,
And burning eyes, about a golden deed,
A vanished race, and high unmortal Shades.

## SHAKESPEARE

When to the market-place of dreams I went
To bid a penny for the firmament,

I sudden came upon a star-high man
Whose mighty composition hid the sun
With wings as wide as worlds; and, when he ran
In space, I thought that wind and he were one.
Abrupt he checks those truceless feet and stands
Deliberate with lightnings in his hands,
Over the Sphinx. Created things attend,
The speculations of the gods descend
Upon Earth's human champion stood at bay.
A moment's pause—slow subtle smile—and he,
Murmuring, "Lord! what fools these mortals be!"
Heedless and headlong, goes his boisterous way.

## ROBERT NICHOLS

Robert (Malise Bowyer) Nichols was born on the Isle of Wight in 1893. His first volume, *Invocations* (1915), was published while he was at the front, Nichols having joined the army as an undergraduate at Trinity College, Oxford. After serving one year as second lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery, he was incapacitated by shell shock, visiting America in 1918-19 as a lecturer. His *Ardors and Endurances* (1917) is a representative early work of this poet, although *The Budded Branch* (1918) and *Aurelia* (1920) show an advance in power.

Since 1920, Nichols has devoted himself to drama and philosophic fiction, *Fantastica: The Smile of the Sphinx* (1921) being followed by *Guilty Souls* (1922).

The poet, theorist and dramatist were fused in *Wings Over Europe* (1928), a play written in collaboration with Maurice Browne. Here the sheer force of Nichols' conviction has vitalized a drama in which there is no specious romantic element, in which no woman appears or is mentioned, in which the entire action transpires around a table in a room on Downing Street. The tension in which a struggle of ideas rises to a creative excitement could have been accomplished only by a poet.

### FULFILLMENT

Was there love once? I have forgotten her.
  Was there grief once? Grief still is mine.
Other loves I have; men rough, but men who stir
  More joy, more grief than love of thee and thine.

Faces cheerful, full of whimsical mirth,
  Lined by the wind, burned by the sun;
Bodies enraptured by the abounding earth,
  As whose children, brothers we are and one.

And any moment may descend hot death
  To shatter limbs! pulp, tear, and blast
Belovèd soldiers who love rude life and breath
  Not less for dying faithful to the last.

O the fading eyes, the grimèd face turned bony,
  Open, black, gushing mouth, fallen head,
Failing pressure of a held hand shrunk and stony,
  O sudden spasm, release of the dead!

Was there love once? I have forgotten her.
  Was there grief once? Grief still is mine.
O loved, living, dying, heroic soldier,
  All, all my joy, my grief, my love are thine!

## THE PILGRIM

Put by the sun, my joyful soul,
We are for darkness that is whole;

Put by the wine, now for long years
We must be thirsty with salt tears;

Put by the rose, bind thou instead
The fiercest thorns about thy head;

Put by the courteous tire, we need
But the poor pilgrim's blackest weed;

Put by—albeit with tears—thy lute,
Sing but to God or else be mute.

Take leave of friends save such as dare
Thy love with loneliness to share.

It is full tide. Put by regret.
Turn, turn away. Forget. Forget.

Put by the sun, my lightless soul,
We are for darkness that is whole.

## TO ——

Asleep within the deadest hour of night
And turning with the earth, I was aware
How suddenly the eastern curve was bright,
As when the sun arises from his lair.
But not the sun arose: it was thy hair
Shaken up heaven in tossing leagues of light.

Since then I know that neither night nor day
May I escape thee, O my heavenly hell!
Awake, in dreams, thou springest to waylay;
And should I dare to die, I know full well
Whose voice would mock me in the mourning bell,
Whose face would greet me in hell's fiery way.

## NEARER

Nearer and ever nearer . . .
My body, tired but tense,
Hovers 'twixt vague pleasure
And tremulous confidence.

Arms to have and to use them
And a soul to be made
Worthy, if not worthy;
If afraid, unafraid.

To endure for a little,
To endure and have done:
Men I love about me,
Over me the sun!

And should at last suddenly
Fly the speeding death,
The four great quarters of heaven
Receive this little breath.

Wilfred Owen's biography is pitifully brief. He was born at Oswestry on the 18th of March, 1893, was educated at the Birkenhead Institute, matriculated at London University in 1910, obtained a private tutorship in 1913 near Bordeaux and remained there for two years. In 1915, in spite of delicate health, he joined the Artist's Rifles, served in France from 1916 to June, 1917, when he was invalided home. Fourteen months later, he returned to the Western Front, was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry in October, and was killed while trying to get his men across the Sambre Canal—with tragic irony—a week before the armistice, on November 4, 1918.

Owen's name was unknown to the world until his friend Siegfried Sassoon unearthed the contents of his posthumous volume, *Poems* (1920). It was evident at once that here was one of the most important contributions to the literature of the War, expressed by a poet whose courage was only surpassed by his integrity of mind and nobility of soul. The restrained passion as well as the pitiful outcries in Owen's poetry have a spiritual kinship with Sassoon's stark verses. They reflect that second stage of the War, when the glib patter wears thin and the easy patriotics have a sardonic sound in the dug-outs and trenches. "He never," writes Sassoon, "wrote his poems (as so many war poets did) to make the effect of a personal gesture. He pitied others; he did not pity himself."

In a scrap which serves as an unfinished preface, Owen wrote, "This book is not about heroes. English poetry is not yet fit to speak of them. Nor is it about deeds or lands, nor anything about glory, honor or dominion. . . .

except War.
Above all, this book is not concerned with Poetry,
The subject of it is War, and the pity of War.
The Poetry is in the pity."

"Strange Meeting," "Miners," and the poignant "Futility" illustrate, beneath their emotional content, Owen's great fondness for assonance. He was continually experimenting with devices to enrich or take the place of rhyme, testing alliterative consonants as substitutes for the prepared and often monotonous matching of vowels. Almost half of his volume is a record of such unique and surprisingly successful experiments. But it is the nobility, the profound sympathy, compassionate without ever becoming maudlin, that gives Owen's verse a place among the authentic poetry of his day. "Dulce et Decorem Est" is obviously a reaction against the "glory" of war; but it is bigger than its subject, something far beyond a protest, surpassing its program.

It is difficult to choose among Owen's few but compelling poems. "Apologia pro Poemate Meo," "Greater Love," "Anthem for Doomed Youth" and the rhymed suspensions already mentioned, will live beyond the tragic events during which they were created. Time has already found a high place for them.

### FUTILITY

Move him into the sun—
Gently its touch awoke him once,
At home, whispering of fields unsown.
Always it woke him, even in France.
Until this morning and this snow.
If anything might rouse him now
The kind old sun will know.

Think how it wakes the seeds—
Woke, once, the clay of a cold star.
Are limbs so dear-achieved, are sides
Full-nerved,—still warm,—too hard to stir?
Was it for this the clay grew tall?
—Oh, what made fatuous sunbeams toil
To break earth's sleep at all?

### APOLOGIA PRO POEMATE MEO

I, too, saw God through mud—
The mud that cracked on cheeks when wretches smiled.
War brought more glory to their eyes than blood,
And gave their laughs more glee than shakes a child.

Merry it was to laugh there—
Where death becomes absurd and life absurder.
For power was on us as we slashed bones bare
Not to feel sickness or remorse of murder.

I, too, have dropped off fear—
Behind the barrage, dead as my platoon,
And sailed my spirit surging, light and clear
Past the entanglement where hopes lay strewn;

And witnessed exultation—
Faces that used to curse me, scowl for scowl,
Shine and lift up with passion of oblation,
Seraphic for an hour, though they were foul.

I have made fellowships—
Untold of happy lovers in old song.
For love is not the binding of fair lips
With the soft silk of eyes that look and long,

By Joy, whose ribbon slips,—
But wound with war's hard wire whose stakes are strong;
Bound with the bandage of the arm that drips;
Knit in the welding of the rifle-thong.

I have perceived much beauty
In the hoarse oaths that kept our courage straight;
Heard music in the silentness of duty;
Found peace where shell-storms spouted reddest spate.

Nevertheless, except you share
With them in hell the sorrowful dark of hell,
Whose world is but the trembling of a flare,
And heaven but as the highway for a shell,

You shall not hear their mirth:
You shall not come to think them well content
By any jest of mine. These men are worth
Your tears: You are not worth their merriment.

## ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them; no prayers nor bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-bys.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

## DULCE ET DECORUM EST

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame, all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells drooping softly behind.

Gas! Gas! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,
But some one still was yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes wilting in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin,
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs
Bitten as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old lie: *Dulce et decorum est*
*Pro patria mori.*[1]

[1] "It is sweet and dignified to die for one's country."

## GREATER LOVE

Red lips are not so red
As the stained stones kissed by the English dead.
Kindness of wooed and wooer
Seems shame to their love pure.
O Love, your eyes lose lure
When I behold eyes blinded in my stead!

Your slender attitude
Trembles not exquisite like limbs knife-skewed,
Rolling and rolling there
Where God seems not to care;
Till the fierce love they bear
Cramps them in death's extreme decrepitude.

Your voice sings not so soft,—
Though even as wind murmuring through raftered loft,—
Your dear voice is not clear,
Gentle, and evening clear,
As theirs whom none now hear
Now earth has stopped their piteous mouths that coughed.

Heart, you were never hot,
Nor large, nor full like hearts made great with shot;
And though your hand be pale,
Paler are all which trail
Your cross through flame and hail:
Weep, you may weep, for you may touch them not.

## MINERS

There was a whispering in my hearth,
A sigh of the coal,
Grown wistful of a former earth
It might recall.

I listened for a tale of leaves
And smothered ferns,
Proud forests, and the low sly lives
Before the fawns.

My fire might show steam-phantoms simmer
From Time's old caldron,
Before the birds made nests in summer,
Or men had children.

But the coals were murmuring of their mine.
And moans down there,
Of boys that slept wry sleep, and men
Writhing for air.

I saw white bones in the cinder-shard,
Bones without number.
For many hearts with coal are charred,
And few remember.

I thought of all that worked dark pits
Of war, and died
Digging the rock where Death reputes
Peace lies indeed:

Comforted years will sit soft-chaired,
In rooms of amber,
The years will stretch their hands, well cheered
By our life's ember;

The centuries will burn rich loads
With which we groaned,
Whose warmth shall lull their dreamy lids,
While songs are crooned;
But they will not dream of us poor lads
Lost in the ground.

## STRANGE MEETING

It seemed that out of the battle I escaped
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped
Through granites which Titanic wars had groined.
Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,
Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.
Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and stared
With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,
Lifting distressful hands as if to bless.
And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall.

With a thousand fears that vision's face was grained;
Yet no blood reached there from the upper ground,
And no guns thumped, or down the flues made moan.
"Strange, friend," I said, "here is no cause to mourn."
"None," said the other, "save the undone years,
The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,
Was my life also; I went hunting wild
After the wildest beauty in the world,
Which lies not calm in eyes, or braided hair,
But mocks the steady running of the hour,
And if it grieves, grieves richlier than here.
For by my glee might many men have laughed,
And of my weeping something has been left,
Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,
The pity of war, the pity war distilled.
Now men will go content with what we spoiled,
Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.
They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress,
None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress.
Courage was mine, and I had mystery,
Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery;
To miss the march of this retreating world
Into vain citadels that are not walled.
Then when much blood had clogged their chariot-wheels
I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,
Even with truths that lie too deep for taint.
I would have poured my spirit without stint
But not through wounds; not on the cess of war.
Foreheads of men have bled where no wounds were.
I am the enemy you killed, my friend.
I knew you in this death; for so you frowned
Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.
I parried; but my hands were loath and cold.
Let us sleep now. . . ."

## FRANK PREWETT

Frank Prewett was born on a farm near Mount Forest, Ontario, Canada, of a pioneer family, August 24, 1893. He attended University College, Toronto, and joined the University officers' Train-

ing Corps on the outbreak of war, but enlisted in the ranks shortly afterwards. He served, as he puts it, "uneventfully" at the Front. After peace was declared, he entered Oxford as an undergraduate, and subsequently has lived as a farmer near Abingdon, Berkshire.

Prewett's first publication was a little volume, *Poems* (1920), which sounded an agreeable though not unusual note. *The Rural Scene* (1924) is far more personal. In his condensed simplicities, Prewett strikes the truly pastoral note. Bound to the soil by inheritance as well as by a natural affection, the poet never strains to achieve that *naïveté* which one so often finds in the work of many of the Georgians. His is the gift of spontaneous song; his is an instinctive expression of "the rural scene" with rarely a trace of affectation.

### "OUT OF THE NIGHT"

Out of the night they drop with troubled cries,
  Splitting the keen-tuned freezing air,
Lone travelers through the wind-cut skies
  Instinct-propelled to regions harsh and bare.

They settle with loud shuffling midst the snow;
  The pitiless cold hushes all things to peace;
And I reluctant silent homeward go,
  But leave my soul to chatter with the geese.

Oh, ye mysterious creatures swift and high
  That beat in angle-flights from land to land,
Whence came into your breasts your troubled cry
  And strange desire that gathers you like sand!

With the first streak of dawn they crane their necks,
  Cry out aloud, and rise upon the air,
Taking with them my soul, nor much it recks
  Towards what homeless wastes their flight may bear.

### "WHEN CUCKOO FIRST"

When cuckoo first the vale o'erflows
  With barks and bubble-blasts of sound,
And daisies white, or tinctured rose,
  Make a pleasanter sky the ground,
Then maids are trim and neatly seen
  And youth strides godly under green.

Spring is a season we revive
With the upthrusting hedgy things,
When yellowhammers courtship drive
And old cock-pheasants busk their wings,
Then cows dream udder-deep in grass
And hawk over hovers with eye of glass.

Cheevio-chee trills on the spray,
He finds his life so good;
Oh, now be natural and gay
Like the kind God meant we should,
For all things beautiful, sight and sound,
Love made, and make love to abound.

## VOICES OF WOMEN

Met ye my love?
Ye might in France have met him;
He has a wooing smile,
Who sees cannot forget him!
Met ye my love?
—We shared full many a mile.

Saw ye my love?
In lands far-off he has been,
With his yellow-tinted hair;
In Egypt such ye have seen.
Ye knew my love?
—I was his brother there.

Heard ye my love?
My love ye must have heard,
For his voice when he will
Tinkles like cry of a bird;
Heard ye my love?
—We sang on a Grecian hill.

Behold your love,
And how shall I forget him,
His smile, his hair, his song?
Alas, no maid shall get him
For all her love,
Where he sleeps a million strong.

### SNOW-BUNTINGS

They come fluttering helpless to the ground
Like wreaths of wind-caught snow,
Uttering a plaintive, chirping sound,
And rise and fall, and know not where they go.

So small they are, with feathers ruffled blown,
Adrift between earth desolated and leaden sky;
Nor have they ever known
Any but frozen earth, and scudding clouds on high.

What hand doth guide these hapless creatures small
To sweet seeds that the withered grasses hold?—
The little children of men go hungry all,
And stiffen and cry with numbing cold.

In a sudden gust the flock are whirled away
Uttering a frightened, chirping cry,
And are lost like a wraith of departing day,
Adrift between earth desolate and leaden sky.

## RICHARD CHURCH

Richard Church was born in London in 1893 and began to write at the age of eighteen, having by that time also obtained a permanent post in the Civil Service. He has written for the majority of the weeklies, particularly *The Spectator*, for which he is a regular reviewer.

His volume, *Philip* (1921), reveals the work of an artist extremely sensitive to the implications behind the physical fact; a poet who, like a lesser Robert Frost, combines the power of sight with insight.

Since 1922 Church has developed a more somber note. *Mood Without Measure* (1927) is, as the title indicates, a transcript of emotion in free or cadenced verse instead of meter. *Theme with Variations* (1928), though a smaller volume, has larger implications. Never a popular poet, scarcely an enjoyable one in a general sense, Church frequently succeeds in sounding, in a subterranean music, currents deeper than surface agitations.

## THE LANTERN

She swings the lantern. Night around her
Swings out, swings in; the roadside falls.
Under her feet abysmal darkness sinks;
Then from the pit, to meet her feet,
Earth rises, somber stones and steady soil
Loom up, stare at the lantern, then . . .
Sink, sink again as it swings.

On she tramps, towering above the lantern,
All her daylight beauty lifted away,
Underlit, and drenched with the dye,
The smudgy gold of the drowsy beams from the lantern.
Over the light her hip turns smooth and strong,
Rolling the shadows to and fro on its breadth,
To and fro in rhythm as on she swings.—
The gaunt trees over her leap, and mope, and bow.—
And one deep breast, like the old moon lacking light,
Rides above, rimmed with a ghostly line,
Then waxes full as the lantern swings before.
Crowning this wild-lit moving life,
The aureoled hair glows gold, a smoke-veiled fire,
Flaming and changing, but ever her crown as she swings
On, swings on, steady and sure, while the earth and skies
Tumble and leap and prance and dance round the lantern.

The cows are milked; she is going home to her babe.

## FROM AN UPLAND VALLEY

In a high valley of the hills
Where the wind-spun Earth
In a gust of mirth,
I saw the conflict of our wills:
You the wild
Unreconciled
Self-diviner, trustless; true
Only to the cruel self in you;
Cruel yet kind,
Harsh, tortured mind,

Worse than wanton, sweeter than faith;
I saw you, heard you, fought you—wraith!

There is no absence since you came
Into this vale we call
Life, where the winds fall
Like eagles on quarry, a piercing blame,
Then lulling to dear
Confidences, near
Whisperings, close, so intimate
There's hardly room for love or hate
To slip between.
For what has been,
Was past, is present, will future be,
One piercing agony, one joy for me.

And you, so swift, so sure, burnt clean
And sparse with your soul-inflicted pain,
What have you left to feel?
Could you see the trees kneel
As they kneel here beneath the storm,
Bowed with invisible alarm
Down to stones, grasses,
Sheep-runs, hare-passes,
Shuddering under the siffling wrath
That hisses through each gap and path;
Could you be near me
Would your mind sear me,
With such a wild exemplar by,
As this embrace of earth and sky?

I torture you, I who am still
Yours, shall be till death takes his fill
Of the brimmed lake
Whereat we slake
Our thirst, self poured on self, and run
Into such stillness under the sun
That light is pain,
And loss is gain
Refracted from that source of pleasure.
Oh, brood on this, dear heart, at leisure;

Absent, here,
Gone, but near,
Your passion is flame you cannot measure.

## PORTENT

There is no sound:
Only the quiet brittle of the fire
And flake-fall of ash:
Only the pursed drip,
Long drop, drip of water:
Only the sigh,
The high sigh of winter trees
As the east sifts through their branches:
Only the tramp, tramp,
And running to and fro of thoughts
Far away down the avenues of my mind:
Only that ominous gathering,
Distant murmur and cry,
Faint clash of steel:
Only that hoarse preparation
In the sleeping city of my brain.

## THE PURIFICATION

They have gone over, the god, the friend, the lover,
They have gone over.
It is growing grey now;
There comes the end of day now.

They were signs then, the stars were a glory for men,
They were signs then.
Those lights flare unseen now,
Things paltry and mean now.

They were true pleasure, the friendly trust, the praise without measure.
They were true pleasure.
Praise is an empty sound now.
Trust treads no firm ground now.

They were music, joy, and truth, the kisses she gave him in youth.
They were music, joy, and truth.
They are less beautiful now;
They are but dutiful now.

Aye, they have come to an end, the god, the lover, the friend;
They have come to an end.
The soul is alone now:
Strong, naked, full-grown now.

## FRANK KENDON

Frank Kendon was born in 1893 at Goudhurst, Kent, educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, and was in Egypt and Palestine during the War. Besides being a poet, he has been a schoolmaster and journalist, "a countryman by birth and youth, Londoner by necessity, poet by chance, business man by fate."

Kendon's first appearance was in his section in *Poems by Four Authors* (1920). A full view of his characteristics is obtained in the succeeding *Poems and Sonnets* (1922) in which, without straining for idiomatic effect, Kendon achieves a personal distinction. He is particularly happy in his combinations of rhyme and assonance, or (as in "I spend my days vainly") in the variation of rhyming vowels and shifting consonantal sounds, sometimes referred to as "analyzed rhyme." The first two lyrics here reprinted are unusually adroit pieces of technique—and both are much more than mere technical exercises.

A comparison of "The Kernel" and "I Spend My Days Vainly," with Wilfred Owen's "Futility" and "Strange Meeting" will reward those interested in the manipulation of rhyme-departures.

### "I SPEND MY DAYS VAINLY"

I spend my days vainly,
  Not in delight;
Though the world is elate
  And tastes her joys finely.

Here wrapped in slow musing
  Lies my dark mind,
To no music attuned
  Save its own, and despising

The lark for remoteness,
  The thrush for bold lying,
The soft wind for blowing,
  And the round sun for brightness.

O tarry for me, sweet;
  I shall stir, I shall wake!
And the melody you seek
  Shall be lovely, though late.

## THE KERNEL

Now that the flush of summer is gone,
And in the lane no flower is seen,
    No hedge in leaf,
No tree in gold or green;

Now that the golden fruit is stored,
And in the wood no song is heard,
    No merry stir
Of song from any bird;

Now that the uncompanioned wind
Blows cold across the naked land
    And, hung in black,
Bare trees like mourners stand;

Winter reveals through falling rain,
A strength which summer had left unseen:
    Beauty and peace
Which, but for tears, had been in vain,
Which, but for loss, had never been.

## THE IMMIGRANT

When Ruth was old
She'd take her children's children on her knee,
They never wearied to be told
Tales of her girlhood in a far country.

For though her eyes grew dim
Men said of her: "Her heart is always young,"
And Boaz, while she spoke of him,
Loved the faint accent of a foreign tongue.

## HERBERT READ

Herbert Read was born, December 4, 1893, at Muscoates Grange, Kirbymoorside, Yorkshire. He was educated at Crossley's School, Halifax, and at the University of Leeds. Commissioned in January 1915 to the Yorkshire Regiment, he fought in France and Belgium from 1915 to 1918, having been made a captain in 1917. He left the army in 1919, married, and became Assistant at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Read's early work was experimental and unsatisfactory; his first volume, *Songs of Chaos* (1915), scarcely justified the title. *Naked Warriors* (1919), a much more vitalized work, pronounced, as against patriotic sentimentalities, what Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen had been saying. But Read's was no mere echo; his utterance, gnarled and contorted, formed vivid if unlovely lines. *Mutations of the Phoenix* (1923) is overweighted by a concern with style and by the influence of T. S. Eliot, although Read has his own distinct philosophy intense and individualistic.

*Collected Poems 1913-1925* (1926) presents, in less than one hundred pages, a progress and, in the midst of disintegration, a centralized faith. Read, established as a critic by his *Reason and Romanticism* (1926) and *English Prose Style* (1928), is still a poet in transition. But under the cloudy angers and distortions he suggests that

> . . . some state of high serenity
> Exists beyond the range
> Of febrile senses.

Besides editing T. E. Hulme's *Speculations* (see page 586) and being the author of a book of war sketches, *In Retreat* (1925), Read has written a book on ceramics and is one of the foremost living authorities on pottery.

### DEVICE

O that I might believe that time
Is but a measure thrown on things
That hold existence in a sphere
Intense alone, and always felt

In full reality! For then
I could evade despondency
By magnifying to my frame
The ecstatic beat that night and day
Pulses within the milk-white walls
Of mental sloth, eager to break
Into the radiant release
Of vision divine and precise.

—Time that is shrouded thought
Involving earth and life in doubt.

### *From* THE ANALYSIS OF LOVE

Nature has perpetual tears
  In drooping boughs,
And everywhere inanimate death
  Is immemorial.

But I have naught that will express
  The grief I feel
When men and moods combine to show
  The end of this—

This mental ecstasy all spent
  In disuniting death;
And the years that spread
  Oblivion on our zest.

### THE REFUGEES

Mute figures with bowed heads
They travel along the road:
Old women, incredibly old,
And a hand-cart of chattels.

They do not weep:
Eyes are too raw for tears.

Past them have hastened
Processions of retreating gun-teams,
Baggage-wagons and swift horsemen.
Now they struggle along
With the rearguard of a broken army.

We will hold the enemy towards nightfall
And they will move
Mutely into the dark behind us,
Only the creaking cart
Disturbing their sorrowful serenity.

## SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER

Sylvia Townsend Warner was born December 1893 at Harrow on the Hill, Middlesex, where her father was a school-master. From 1916 to 1926 she worked on the preparation of the critical edition of *Tudor Church Music*, a vast and learned compilation in ten volumes, of which she was one of the four editors. Research work in the music of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was not only her occupation but her preoccupation, and it was not until 1922 that she started writing as a by-product.

Although she first attracted wide attention with *Lolly Willowes: or The Loving Huntsman*, which was the first "book-of-the-month" in America in 1926, her literary début was made with a volume of verse, *The Espalier* (1925). There followed two more books of prose, quaintly misnamed novels by the publishers: *Mr. Fortune's Maggot* (1927) and *The True Heart* (1929). Three years after her first volume, her second book of poems appeared, *Time Importuned* (1928).

Although her work seems to fall into two categories, it actually forms a unified expression. The poems, objective, sharply characterized, compact with drama, are condensed stories; the novels are poetry from beginning to end. *Lolly Willowes* is a fantasy which alternates between the unashamedly tender and the lightly terrible. *Mr. Fortune's Maggot* adds compassionate understanding to extravaganza; fantasy turns here to philosophy whose motto implies surrender instead of possession in love. *The True Heart* is the simplest and the deepest of her larger works. Seemingly an idyll of Victorian England, it is really one of the oldest love stories, the classic tale of Psyche and Eros retold. Although no critic seems to have noted the fact, Miss Warner has supplied sufficient hints; "Sukey" is obviously an Anglicized Psyche; the mad Love, Eros, is the witless "Eric"; Venus is less than half-disguised as "Mrs. Seaborn."

Thus all of Miss Warner's work is a paradoxical union of subtlety and simplicity, with no sense of strain between these opposites. Each quality is equally characteristic of this author; and if the mode of expression tends toward increasing simplicity,

it is as though the subtle brain were being counseled if not always controlled by the simple—and the true—heart.

The element which holds these contraries in so nice a balance is the rightness, the so-to-speak connoisseurship of Miss Warner's taste. She can be utterly exquisite when elegance dictates the mode; her coarseness is no less in place when theme and measure demand rudeness. Thus *Time Importuned* has the same sparse imagery and no little of the earth smell of which *The Espalier* is redolent, but the rustic note is not so broad; the rough country humor which underlines her bucolic comedies turns to "rustic elegies" without effort or affectation. "Nelly Trim," one of the thrillingly stern poems of this generation, finds its complement in "The Rival"; the neat incisiveness of "The Alarum" is matched by the bitter-sweetness of "Song."

Craftsmen will be quick to detect Miss Warner's innovations. She is particularly resourceful in her use of the unrhymed line; she is as adroit in her mingling of assonantal and dissonantal rhyme as Wilfred Owen and Humbert Wolfe. But it is unfair to place too much emphasis on technique. Each reader will discover a different quality on which to lay stress: the poet's marked accent; or her half-modern, half-archaic blend of naïveté and erudition; or the low-pitched but tart tone of voice, like a feminine Thomas Hardy. Every year seems to distill Miss Warner's gift nearer to its basic essence. "Modo and Alciphron," which has not yet appeared in book form, illustrates this quality in which *grotesquerie* and metaphysics so strangely combine. "Killing No Murder" and "Building in Stone," two other uncollected poems, abandon by-play and raillery in their grave music and graver implications.

Greatly gifted, she barely misses greatness. Ironic, critical, compassionate, her mind rules her emotions a fraction too well. She cannot quite give herself to a self-forgetting, world-forgetting ecstasy. Miss Warner is a philosopher, but never a labored one. She is as one who walks, light-footed, a long road, singing her long thoughts to a light—though usually legato—measure.

## FOUR EPITAPHS

John Bird, a laborer, lies here,
Who served the earth for sixty year
With spade and mattock, drill and plow;
But never found it kind till now.

■

I, an unwedded wandering dame,
For quiet into the country came:
Here, hailed it; but did not foretell
I'd stay so long and rest so well.

*

I, Richard Kent, beneath these stones,
Sheltered my old and trembling bones;
But my best manhood, quick and brave,
Lies buried in another grave.

*

Her grieving parents cradled here
Ann Monk, a gracious child and dear.
Lord, let this epitaph suffice:
Early to Bed and Early to Rise.

## COUNTRY THOUGHT

Idbury bells are ringing
And Westcote has just begun,
And down in the valley
Ring the bells of Bledington.

To hear all the church-bells
Ring-ringing together,
Chiming so pleasantly
As if nothing were the matter.

The notion might come
To some religious thinker,
That The Lord God Almighty
Is a traveling tinker,

Who travels through England
From north to south,
And sits him at the roadside
With a pipe in his mouth,

A-tinkling and a-tinkering
To mend up the souls
That week-day wickedness
Has worn into holes.

And yet there is not
One tinker, but Three—
One at Westcote, One at Bledington
And One at Idbury.

## NELLY TRIM

"Like men riding,
The mist from the sea
Drives down the valley
And baffles me."
"Enter, traveler,
Whoever you be."

By lamplight confronted
He staggered and peered;
Like a wet bramble
Was his beard.
"Sit down, stranger,
You look a-feared."

Shudders rent him
To the bone,
The wet ran off him
And speckled the stone.
"Dost bide here alone, maid?"
"Yes, alone."

As he sat down
In the chimney-nook
Over his shoulder
He cast a look,
As if the night
Were pursuing; she took

A handful of brash
To mend the fire,
He eyed her close
As the flame shot higher;
He spoke—and the cattle
Moved in the byre.

"Though you should heap
Your fire with wood,
'Twouldn't warm me
Nor do no good,
Unless you first warm me
As a maiden should."

With looks unwavering,
With breath unstirred,
She took off her clothes
Without a word,
And stood up naked
And white as a curd.

He breathed her to him
With famished sighs,
Against her bosom
He sheltered his eyes,
And warmed his hands
Between her thighs.

Strangely assembled
In the quiet room,
Alone alight
Amidst leagues of gloom,
So brave a bride,
So sad a groom;

And strange love-traffic
Between these two;
Nor mean, nor shamefaced—
As though they'd do
Something more solemn
Than they knew:

As though by this greeting
Which chance had willed
'Twixt him so silent
And her so stilled,
Some pledge or compact
Were fulfilled,

Made for all time
In times unknown,
'Twixt man and woman
Standing alone
In mirk night
By a tall stone.

His wayfaring terrors
All cast aside,
Brave now the bridegroom
Quitted the bride;
As he came, departing—
Undenied.

But once from darkness
Turned back his sight
To where in the doorway
She held a light:
"Good-by to you, maiden."
"Stranger, good night."

Long time has this woman
Been bedded alone.
The house where she slept
Lies stone on stone:
She'd not know her ash-tree,
So warped has it grown.

But yet this story
Is told of her
As a memorial;
And some aver
She'd comfort thus any
Poor traveler.

A wanton, you say—
Yet where's the spouse,
However true
To her marriage-vows,
To whom the lot
Of the earth-born allows

More than this?—
To comfort the care
Of a stranger, bound
She knows not where,
And afraid of the dark,
As his fathers were.

## THE ALARUM

With its rat's tooth the clock
Gnaws away delight.
Piece by piece, piece by piece
It will gnaw away tonight,

Till the coiled spring released
Rouses me with a hiss
To a day, to another night
Less happy than this.

And yet my own hands wound it
To keep watch while I slept;
For though they be with sorrow
Appointments must be kept.

## AFTER HE HAD GONE

After he had gone the wind rose,
Buffeting the house and rumbling in the chimney,
And I thought: It will roar against him like a lion
As onward he goes.

Seven miles before him, all told—
Chilled will be the lips I kissed so warm at parting,
Kissed in vain; for he's forth into the wind, and kisses
Won't keep out the cold.

Closer should I have kissed, fondlier prayed:
Pleasant is the room in the wakeful firelight,
And within is the bed, arrayed with peace and safety.
Would he had stayed!

## ELIZABETH

"Elizabeth the Beloved"—
So much says the stone
That is all with weather defaced,
With moss overgrown.

But if to husband or child,
Brother or sire, most dear
Is past deciphering;
This only is clear:

That once she was beloved,
Was Elizabeth,
And is now beloved no longer,
If it be not of Death.

## TRIUMPH OF SENSIBILITY

"Tiger, strolling at my side,
Why have you unbound the zone
Of your individual pride?
Why so meek did you come sneaking
After me as I walked alone?

"Since the goat and since the deer
Wait the shattering death you wield
In a constancy of fear,
By your stripes, my strange disciple,
Am I also to be healed?"

"Woman, it was your tender heart
Did my bloody heart compel.
Master-mistress of my art,
Past my wit of wrath your pity,
Ruthless and inexorable.

"I hunt flesh by fallible sense;
You a more exquisite prey pursue
With a finer prescience,
And lap up another's unhappiness:
Woman, let me learn of you."

## SAD GREEN

The glass falls lower,
And lowers the wet sky,
And by a fire sit I
Hearing the lawn-mower

Nearing and waning—
Howbeit out of tune
The essential voice of June,
Patient and uncomplaining;

For though by frost and thunder
Summer be overthrown,
The grass plat must be mown
And the daisies kept under.

## SONG

She has left me, my pretty,
Like a fleeting of apple-blows
She has left her loving husband,
And who she has gone to
The Lord only knows.

She has left me, my pretty,
A needle in a shirt,
Her pink flannelette bedgown,
And a pair of pattens
Caked over with dirt.

I care not for the pattens,
Let 'em lie in the mold;
But the pretty pink bedgown
Will comfort my lumbago
When midnights are cold;

And the shirt I will wear it,
And the needle may bide.
Let it prick, let it rankle,
Let my flesh remember
How she lay against my side!

## THE RIVAL

The farmer's wife looked out of the dairy:
She saw her husband in the yard;
She said: "A woman's life is hard,
The chimney smokes, the churn's contrary."
She said:
"I of all women am the most ill-starred.

"Five sons I've borne and seven daughters,
And the last of them is on my knee.
Finer children you could not see.
Twelve times I've put my neck in the halter:
You'd think
So much might knit my husband's love to me.

"But no! Though I should serve him double
He keeps another love outdoors,
Who thieves his strength, who drains his stores,
Who haunts his mind with fret and trouble;
I pray
God's curse may light on such expensive whores.

"I am grown old before my season,
Weather and care have worn me down;
Each year delves deeper in my frown,
I've lost my shape and for good reason:
But she
Yearly puts on young looks like an Easter gown.

"And year by year she has betrayed him
With blight and mildew, rain and drought,
Smut, scab, and murrain, all the rout;
But he forgets the tricks she's played him
When first
The fields give a good smell and the leaves put out.

"Aye, come the Spring, and the gulls keening,
Over her strumpet lap he'll ride,
Watching those wasteful fields and wide,
Where the darkened tilth will soon be greening,
With looks
Fond and severe, as looks the groom on bride."

### KILLING NO MURDER

You, master of delays,
Need no artillery but days
One after one
Loosed off in blank against hope's garrison;
No art,
Save doing nothing, to undo a heart.

### MODO AND ALCIPHRON

In the Lybian desert I
Saw a hermit's carcass lie,
And a melancholy fiend
Over the battered bosom leaned.

Black as a widow dead for love,
Motionless he drooped above;
Only his tail from side to side
Switched the sand with narrow stride.

"Grievest thou, imp, to see thy spoil
Lie thus quenched on burning soil?
Rinsed the brain, and the loin's lust
Safely reconciled with dust?

"Or perchance thy mournful hide
Dreads how well the lash will chide
When Pope Satan makes thee skip
For a negligent stewardship?"

With a sullen silence he
Raised his head, and looked at me,
Looked me through, and looked away,
Nor for all that I could say

Looked again. Quoth I, I've matched
Patience with yours; and so I watched
The slow, sun-swollen daytime through
To mark what this strange fiend would do.

Cramped and cold I woke from sleep
To hear the fiend begin to weep.
Twinkling in starlight the tears ran
Along his beard, and he began:

"Dead is the holy Alciphron!
Modo's occupation's gone.
All my pretty joys are sped,
Gentle Alciphron is dead!

"Never was there saint so mild
And so easily beguiled;
'Twas pure pleasure to torment
Anything so innocent.

"Danced I, gleaming in a dress
Of nimble maiden nakedness,
His prompt heart with hastening beat
Drummed the measure for my feet,

"And his glances whipped me round,
Till toppling in a dizzy swound
With long recovery I would twine
About him like the conjugal vine,

"While my forked and flickering tongue,
Constant as summer lightning, hung
On the scant flesh that wrapped his bones,
Till sighs long-husbanded, chuckling groans,

"Vouched for the pleasures he endured;
By thorns such pleasures must be cured,
And when most thick the thin blood fell
I knew that I had pleased him well.

"Then at other times I'd sit
Praising his spiritual wit,
Assuring him how deftly he
Could comprehend the Trinity,

"Flesh Christ, with never a trespassing glide
To error on this or t'other side,
Show how original sin doth breed
Inherent in the genital seed,

"And every tinkling sophist quell,
Who questions that the troops of hell
Pester the saint upon his knees,
Actual and numerous as his fleas.

"But most of all 'twas my delight
To cajole him from the elected night
Wherewith the christian cowls his sense
From the allurement and offense

"Of a lost planet. I would be
Damnation singing from a tree
With voice more wildly ravishing
For being damned, or in a spring

"With chill adulteries surprise
Him parched; often I thieved his eyes
To love me in lizard, or in braid
Of sun begetting from a shade

"A spawn of dancing babies—all
Accursed as their original.
In many a salad I laid a snare
Of joy that he on such poor fare

"Fared well, or else on wafts of thyme
Into the warded brain would climb
Unchallenged, or tweaked him by the nose
With the remembrance of a rose.

"Thus did we wrestle, and never chaste
Turtles did rarer dalliance taste,
Thus mixed our opposites, as true
As plighted dock and nettle do,

"Thus to all time example gave
Of the mutual comfort saint should have
With devil, devil with saint, and thus
I clean forgot how envious

"In his unmated splendor sits
He, the Tyrant—"
As oak splits
Before the ax, and falls with loud
Indignant groan, so groaned, so bowed,

The fiend, and lay in silence long;
But once or twice against the throng
Of stars raised up a blackening fist;
Then mourned, as mourning from a mist:

"Alas, how faithless man can be
To a fiend's eternity!
Into untiring malice doomed,
Virtue as long-breathed I presumed;

"With never a care save which art next
To ply I looked on time unvexed,
Nor, in this plenty of sand, did doubt
The tale of his was running out.

"So Alciphron grew old, though I
Knew it not. This gew-gawed sky
Its virgin hood of gray had on,
And light was scarce, when Alciphron

"Awoke, and laid his hand on me,
And stared east. *Haec dies,* said he,
*Quam fecit Dominus.* I too
Looked east, and saw a path run through

"The kindling cloud. It bruised my gaze
To meet the intolerable blaze,
The ostentatious Rose, the blare
And uproar of light which threatened there;

"But Alciphron beheld and smiled,
Crowing for pleasure like a child
Who views its promised sugarplum:
Then, with a crash which has left dumb

"All thunder since, about us came
A simpering angel in a flame,
Who seized upon redemption's prey,
And bore him, like a child, away.

"Thus, O woe, I'm left alone
With this unanswering flesh and bone.
All my pretty joys are sped,
Gentle Alciphron is dead!

"Nothing is left me of my joy
But this contemptuous broken toy.
Modo's occupation's gone,
Dead is the holy Alciphron!"

## THE ABSENCE

How happy I can be with my love away!
No care comes all day;
Like a dapple of clouds the hours pass by,
Time stares from the sky
But does not see me where I lie in the hay,
So still do I lie.

Like points of dew the stars well in the skies;
Taller the trees rise.
Dis-shadowed, unselved, I wander slow,
My thoughts flow and flow,
But whither tending I know not, nor need surmise,
So softly I go,

Till to my quiet bed I must undress—
Then I say, Alas!
That he whom, too anxious or too gay,
I torment all day
Can never know me in my harmlessness
While he is away.

## BUILDING IN STONE

God is still glorified—
To him the wakeful arch holds up in prayer,
Nightly dumb glass keeps vigil to declare
His East, and Eastertide;

The constant pavement lays
Its flatness for his feet, each pier acquaints
Neighbor, him housed; time-thumbed, forgotten saints
Do not forget to praise;

All parcels of the whole,
Each hidden, each revealed, each thrust and stress,
Antiphonally interlocked, confess
Him, stay, and him, control.

Whether upon the fens
Anchored, with all her canvas and all her shrouds,
Ely signal him to willows and clouds
And cattle, or whether Wren's

Unperturbed dome, above
The city roaring with mechanic throat
And climbing in layer on layer of Babel, float
Like an escaping dove,

Or whether in countryside
Stationed all humble and holy churches keep
Faith with the faith of those who lie asleep,
God is still glorified;

Since by the steadfastness
Of his most mute creation man conjures
—Man, so soon hushed—the silence which endures
To bear in mind, and bless.

Dorothy L. Sayers was born in 1893 at Cathedral Choir School, Oxford, where her father was headmaster. She was graduated from Somerville College, Oxford, in 1915, receiving First Honors in Medieval Literature and being one of the first women to take an Oxford degree.

She began her literary life with poetry, a predilection that brought her (in common with Belloc and Chesterton) to the writing of detective stories. Besides creating Lord Peter Wimsey, whose chief pursuits are the collecting of incunabula and the detecting of criminals, Miss Sayers edited the mammoth *The Omnibus of Crime* (1929), without which no library of mystery and horror is complete. Besides her own verse, she has translated one of the loveliest of the medieval romances from the twelfth century French, *Tristran in Brittany* (1929).

### CAROL

The Ox said to the Ass, said he, all on a Christmas night:
"Do you hear the pipe of the shepherds a-whistling over the hill?
That is the angels' music they play for their delight,
'Glory to God in the highest and peace upon earth, goodwill' . . .
Nowell, nowell, my masters, God lieth low in stall,
And the poor labouring Ox was here before you all."

The Ass said to the Ox, said he, all on a Christmas day:
"Do you hear the golden bridles come clinking out of the east?
Those are the three wise Mages that ride from far away
To Bethlehem in Jewry to have their lore increased. . . .
Nowell, nowell, my masters, God lieth low in stall,
And the poor, foolish Ass was here before you all."

## ALDOUS HUXLEY

Aldous (Leonard) Huxley, grandson of Thomas Huxley, was born in 1894 at Godalming and educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. From 1919 to 1921, he was on the editorial staff of *The Athenaeum* and, although he has recently devoted himself entirely to prose, his first publications were in verse; his three early

volumes, *The Burning Wheel* (1916), *The Defeat of Youth* (1918) and *Leda* (1920), being in that medium.

As a poet, Huxley is at least three writers. At times, he is a precise, rather academic picture-maker, rhyming his subjects in the broad, traditional manner. At other times—and far more frequently—he is a disillusioned ironist, a conscious imitator of Rimbaud and Laforgue, a sardonic *Pierrot lunaire*. (The latter vein is best illustrated by the poem "Male and Female Created He Them" and the bitter "Soles Occidere et Redire Possunt" in *Leda*.) More rarely, his poetry strikes the somber note which finds its fullest expression in the novel *Antic Hay* (1923), the note of tragic despair echoing in a vast emptiness. *Brief Candles* (1930) contains four brilliant and ruthless novelettes.

In 1928 Huxley published his largest and most uncomfortable novel, *Point-Counter-Point*. Its theme was futility, disillusion having already been the motivating power—or lack of power—in his short stories, *Limbo* (1920), *Mortal Coils* (1922), *Two or Three Graces* (1926). Active as a feuilletonist, his sketches sometimes attained the dignity of essays, three volumes of them being published since the initial *On the Margin* (1923). If journalism and the impulse to overproduce do not engulf him, Huxley's versatility may well reveal him as one of the more significant if unhappy recorders of his period.

## SONG OF POPLARS

Shepherd, to yon tall poplars tune your flute:
Let them pierce keenly, subtly shrill,
The slow blue rumor of the hill;
Let the grass cry with an anguish of evening gold,
And the great sky be mute.

Then hearken how the poplar trees unfold
Their buds, yet close and gummed and blind,
In airy leafage of the mind,
Rustling in silvery whispers the twin-hued scales
That fade not nor grow old.

"Poplars and fountains and you cypress spires
Springing in dark and rusty flame,
Seek you aught that hath a name?
Or say, say: Are you all an upward agony
Of undefined desires?

"Say, are you happy in the golden march
Of sunlight all across the day?
Or do you watch the uncertain way
That leads the withering moon on cloudy stairs
Over the heaven's wide arch?

"Is it towards sorrow or towards joy you lift
The sharpness of your trembling spears?
Or do you seek, through the gray tears
That blur the sky, in the heart of the triumphing blue,
A deeper, calmer rift?"

So; I have tuned my music to the trees,
And there were voices, dim below
Their shrillness, voices swelling slow
In the blue murmur of hills, and a golden cry
And then vast silences.

## FIFTH PHILOSOPHER'S SONG

A million million spermatozoa,
All of them alive:
Out of their cataclysm but one poor Noah
Dare hope to survive.

And among that billion minus one
Might have chanced to be
Shakespeare, another Newton, a new Donne—
But the One was Me.

Shame to have ousted your betters thus,
Taking ark while the others remained outside!
Better for all of us, forward Homunculus,
If you'd quietly died!

## A SUNSET

Over against the triumph and the close—
Amber and green and rose—
Of this short day,
The pale ghost of the moon grows living-bright
Once more, as the last light
Ebbs slowly away.

Darkening the fringes of these western glories
The black phantasmagories
Of cloud advance
With noiseless footing—vague and villainous shapes,
Wrapped in their ragged fustian capes,
Of some grotesque romance.
But overhead where, like a pool between
Dark rocks, the sky is green
And clear and deep,
Floats windlessly a cloud, with curving breast
Flushed by the fiery west,
In god-like sleep . . .
And in my mind opens a sudden door
That lets me see once more
A little room
With night beyond the window, chill and damp,
And one green-lighted lamp
Tempering the gloom,
While here within, close to me, touching me
(Even the memory
Of my desire
Shakes me like fear), you sit with scattered hair;
And all your body bare
Before the fire
Is lapped about with rosy flame. . . . But still,
Here on the lonely hill,
I walk alone;
Silvery green is the moon's lamp overhead,
The cloud sleeps warm and red,
And you are gone.

## CHARLES HAMILTON SORLEY

Charles Hamilton Sorley, who promised greater things than any of the younger poets, was born at Old Aberdeen in May, 1895. Son of Professor Sorley of Cambridge, he studied at Marlborough College and University College, Oxford. He was finishing his studies abroad and was on a walking-tour along the banks of the Moselle when war came. Sorley returned home to receive an immediate commission in the 7th Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment. In

August, 1915, at the age of 20, he was made a captain. On October 13, 1915, he was killed in action near Hulluch.

Jingoism, violent propaganda, falsely patriotic slogans could not obscure his candid vision. "There is no such thing as a just war," he wrote. "What we are doing is casting out Satan by Satan." At nineteen, while he was training at Shorncliffe, he dared to write, "England—I am sick of the sound of the word. In training to fight for England, I am training to fight for that deliberate hypocrisy, that terrible middle-class sloth of outlook and appalling 'imaginative indolence' that has marked us out from generation to generation. . . . Indeed I think that after the War all brave men will renounce their country and confess that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Such electrifying sentences, as well as his independent appreciations of Masefield, Richard Jefferies, and Thomas Hardy, are to be found in the posthumous *Letters of Charles Sorley* (1919). These letters perform the same service to Sorley the poet as the letters of Keats perform in rounding out that greater poet who also died at the beginning of manhood.

Sorley left but one book, *Marlborough and Other Poems*, a posthumous collection, edited by his father, published in 1916. The verse contained in it is sometimes rough but never rude. Although he admired Masefield, loveliness rather than liveliness was his aim. Restraint, tolerance, and a dignity unusual for a boy of twenty distinguish his verse. There is scarcely a line in Sorley's work which does not breathe the spirit of compelling exaltation.

Whether it blows with breezy youth in "The Song of the Ungirt Runners" or burns with ardor in the sonnets, his poetry is, in the fullest sense, radiant. What Sorley might have accomplished is apparent though indefinable. He died before he was twenty-one.

## TWO SONNETS

### I

Saints have adored the lofty soul of you.
Poets have whitened at your high renown.
We stand among the many millions who
Do hourly wait to pass your pathway down.

You, so familiar, once were strange: we tried
To live as of your presence unaware.
But now in every road on every side
We see your straight and steadfast signpost there.

I think it like that signpost in my land
Hoary and tall, which pointed me to go
Upward, into the hills, on the right hand,
Where the mists swim and the winds shriek and blow,
A homeless land and friendless, but a land
I did not know and that I wished to know.

II

Such, such is Death: no triumph: no defeat:
Only an empty pail, a slate rubbed clean,
A merciful putting away of what has been.

And this we know: Death is not Life effete,
Life crushed, the broken pail. We who have seen
So marvelous things know well the end not yet.

Victor and vanquished are a-one in death:
Coward and brave: friend, foe. Ghosts do not say,
"Come, what was your record when you drew breath?"
But a big blot has hid each yesterday
So poor, so manifestly incomplete.
And your bright Promise, withered long and sped,
Is touched; stirs, rises, opens and grows sweet
And blossoms and is you, when you are dead.

## THE SONG OF THE UNGIRT RUNNERS

We swing ungirded hips,
And lightened are our eyes,
The rain is on our lips,
We do not run for prize.
We know not whom we trust
Nor whitherward we fare,
But we run because we must
Through the great wide air.

The waters of the seas
Are troubled as by storm.
The tempest strips the trees
And does not leave them warm.

Does the tearing tempest pause?
Do the tree tops ask it why?
So we run without a cause
'Neath the big bare sky.

The rain is on our lips,
We do not run for prize.
But the storm the water whips
And the wave howls to the skies.
The winds arise and strike it
And scatter it like sand,
And we run because we like it
Through the broad bright land.

## TO GERMANY

You are blind like us. Your hurt no man designed,
And no man claimed the conquest of your land.
But gropers both, through fields of thought confined,
We stumble and we do not understand.
You only saw your future bigly planned,
And we the tapering paths of our own mind,
And in each other's dearest ways we stand,
And hiss and hate. And the blind fight the blind.

When it is peace, then we may view again
With new-won eyes each other's truer form
And wonder. Grown more loving-kind and warm
We'll grasp firm hands and laugh at the old pain,
When it is peace. But until peace, the storm,
The darkness and the thunder and the rain.

## ROOKS

There where the rusty iron lies,
The rooks are cawing all the day.
Perhaps no man, until he dies,
Will understand them, what they say.

The evening makes the sky like clay.
The slow wind waits for night to rise.
The world is half content. But they

Still trouble all the trees with cries,
That know, and cannot put away,
The yearning to the soul that flies
From day to night, from night to day.

## ALL THE HILLS AND VALES

All the hills and vales along
Earth is bursting into song,
And the singers are the chaps
Who are going to die perhaps.
O sing, marching men,
Till the valleys ring again.
Give your gladness to earth's keeping,
So be glad, when you are sleeping.

Cast away regret and rue,
Think what you are marching to.
Little live, great pass.
Jesus Christ and Barabbas
Were found the same day.
This died, that went his way.
So sing with joyful breath.
For why, you are going to death.
Teeming earth will surely store
All the gladness that you pour.

Earth that never doubts nor fears,
Earth that knows of death, not tears,
Earth that bore with joyful ease
Hemlock for Socrates,
Earth that blossomed and was glad
'Neath the cross that Christ had,
Shall rejoice and blossom too
When the bullet reaches you.
Wherefore, men marching
On the road to death, sing!
Pour your gladness on earth's head,
So be merry, so be dead.

From the hills and valleys earth
Shouts back the sound of mirth,
Tramp of feet and lilt of song
Ringing all the road along.
Ringing, swinging, glad song-throwing,
Earth will echo still when foot
Lies numb and voice mute.

On, marching men, on
To the gates of death with song.
Sow your gladness for earth's reaping,
So you may be glad, though sleeping.
Strew your gladness on earth's bed,
So be merry, so be dead.

## ROBERT GRAVES

Robert (Ranke) Graves, son of the Irish poet and song-writer Alfred Percival Graves, was born July 26, 1895. He was educated at Charterhouse and Oxford, after which he joined the British Expeditionary Force and served three times in France, in the same regiment as Siegfried Sassoon. His activities were as numerous as incongruous. He won a prize at the Olympic games, lost his capital as an unsuccessful shopkeeper, was the biographer of Colonel T. E. Lawrence, and taught literature in Cairo.

Graves was one of the writers who, roused by the War and giving himself to his country, refused to glorify warfare or chant new hymns of hate. Like Sassoon, Graves also reacted against the storm of fury and blood-lust, but, fortified by a lighter and more whimsical spirit, where Sassoon is violent, Graves is volatile; where Sassoon grew bitter, Graves was almost blithe.

An easy gayety rises from *Fairies and Fusiliers* (1917), a surprising and healing humor that is warmly individual. In *Country Sentiment* (1919) Graves turns to a more rustic simplicity. But a buoyant fancy ripples beneath the most archaic of his ballads and a quaintly original turn of mind saves them from their own echoes.

With *Country Sentiment*, Graves, so one was ready to believe, had established his characteristics. His gift was charming rather than startling, playful and lightly *macabre* rather than profound; qualities, which, while not those of a great poet, were distinctly those of an enjoyable one. The young poet seemed happy in his combinations (and mutations) of two traditionally English forms: the ballad and the Mother Goose rhyme. "A Frosty Night," "True

Johnny," "It's a Queer Time," "Neglectful Edward," "I Wonder What It Feels Like to Be Drowned?" are some of the measures written out of a surplus and careless fertility, with little effort, scarcely with thought, and with one eye winking at the Nursery.

But Thought, that enemy of the lyric impulse, spread her theory-spun snare for Graves and soon he was laboring in her toils. He began to analyze, pare, probe, to examine ways, means and the creative process—his own as well as others'. No less than seven volumes were devoted to interpretation and technique; *On English Poetry* (1922), *The Meaning of Dreams* (1924), *Poetic Unreason* (1925), *Contemporary Techniques of Poetry* (1925), *Another Future of Poetry* (1926), *A Survey of Modernist Poetry*, the last in collaboration with Laura Riding (1928). His volumes of verse during this period reflect changing preoccupations. *The Pier Glass* (1921), *Whipperginny* (1923), *Mock Beggar Hall* (1924), *Welchman's Hose* (1925), *The Marmosite's Miscellany*, issued pseudonymously as by "John Doyle" (1925), turn from fancy to philosophy, from philosophy to metaphysics, from Skelton to Freud.

One sees the kaleidoscopic shifts only too plainly in *Collected Poems 1914-1926* and *Poems—1929* (1929) where the whimsical and amatory run through war-verse and "poems of unrest and transition" to the heavily intellectual and awkwardly involved. The later Graves is scarcely the poet who once nonchalantly wrote:

> May sudden justice overtake
> And snap the froward pen,
> That old and palsied poets shake
> Against the minds of men.
>
> Blasphemers trusting to hold caught
> In far-flung webs of ink
> The utmost ends of human thought
> Till nothing's left to think.
>
> But may the gift of heavenly peace
> And glory for all time
> Keep the boy Tom who, tending geese,
> First made the nursery rhyme.

Thus the early Graves (*circa* 1916) seems to be admonishing—and with good reason—the mature but unstabilized experimentalist, who, some dozen years later, attempts the dislocations of James Joyce, echoes the Gertrude Stein song, and flounders in a morass of speculations. Graves began as one who had simplicity rather than acquired *simplesse*. He was a true innocent. By taking thought unsuited to his intuitive temperament he has not increased his stature. He has lost innocence without gaining wisdom.

Much of this intellectual and emotional indecision is reflected in *Good-by to All That* (1930). In this exciting and candid autobiography, Graves (as is made plain by more than the title) waves a public farewell to his youth. Without bitterness or bravado, the poet, like his friends Sassoon and Blunden, describes the horror of an offensive, the drudgery of trench-life, the abuses of officialdom, intensifying his pages with a hatred of injustice in any form. Unlike his fellows, he is even more candid in revealing the stress of his personal—and highly private—encounters. *Good-by to All That* may, as a reviewer implied, "suffer little from that instinctive good taste which is to the twentieth century the unpardonable sin," but, in its undeviating honesty, it rounds and completes not only the portrait of a poet but of a period.

## NEGLECTFUL EDWARD

*Nancy*

Edward, back from the Indian Sea,
"What have you brought for Nancy?"

*Edward*

"A rope of pearls and a gold earring,
And a bird of the East that will not sing.
A carven tooth, a box with a key—"

*Nancy*

"God be praised you are back," says she,
"Have you nothing more for your Nancy?"

*Edward*

"Long as I sailed the Indian Sea
I gathered all for your fancy:
Toys and silk and jewels I bring,
And a bird of the East that will not sing:
What more can you want, dear girl, from me?"

*Nancy*

"God be praised you are back," said she,
"Have you nothing better for Nancy?"

*Edward*

"Safe and home from the Indian Sea,
And nothing to take your fancy?"

*Nancy*

"You can keep your pearls and your gold earring,
And your bird of the East that will not sing,
But, Ned, have you nothing more for me
Than heathenish gew-gaw toys?" says she,
"Have you nothing better for Nancy?"

## IT'S A QUEER TIME

It's hard to know if you're alive or dead
When steel and fire go roaring through your head.

One moment you'll be crouching at your gun
Traversing, mowing heaps down half in fun:
The next, you choke and clutch at your right breast—
No time to think—leave all—and off you go . . .
To Treasure Island where the Spice winds blow,
To lovely groves of mango, quince and lime—
Breathe no good-by, but ho, for the Red West!
It's a queer time.

You're charging madly at them yelling "Fag!"
When somehow something gives and your feet drag.
You fall and strike your head; yet feel no pain
And find . . . you're digging tunnels through the hay
In the Big Barn, 'cause it's a rainy day.

Oh, springy hay, and lovely beams to climb!
You're back in the old sailor suit again.
It's a queer time.

Or you'll be dozing safe in your dug-out—
A great roar—the trench shakes and falls about—
You're struggling, gasping, struggling, then . . . *hullo!*
Elsie comes tripping gayly down the trench,
Hanky to nose—that lyddite makes a stench—

Getting her pinafore all over grime.
Funny! because she died ten years ago!
It's a queer time.

The trouble is, things happen much too quick;
Up jump the Boches, rifles thump and click,
You stagger, and the whole scene fades away:
Even good Christians don't like passing straight
From Tipperary or their Hymn of Hate
To Alleluiah-chanting, and the chime
Of golden harps . . . and . . . I'm not well today . . .
It's a queer time.

## A PINCH OF SALT[1]

When a dream is born in you
With a sudden clamorous pain,
When you know the dream is true
And lovely, with no flaw nor stain,
O then, be careful, or with sudden clutch
You'll hurt the delicate thing you prize so much.

Dreams are like a bird that mocks,
Flirting the feathers of his tail.
When you seize at the salt box,
Over the hedge you'll see him sail.
Old birds are neither caught with salt nor chaff:
They watch you from the apple bough and laugh.

Poet, never chase the dream.
Laugh yourself, and turn away.
Mask your hunger; let it seem
Small matter if he come or stay;
But when he nestles in your hand at last,
Close up your fingers tight and hold him fast.

## I WONDER WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE DROWNED?

Look at my knees,
That island rising from the steamy seas!

[1] Compare the poem on the same theme on page 390.

The candle's a tall lightship; my two hands
Are boats and barges anchored to the sands,
With mighty cliffs all round;
They're full of wine and riches from far lands. . . .
*I wonder what it feels like to be drowned?*

I can make caves,
By lifting up the island and huge waves
And storms, and then with head and ears well under
Blow bubbles with a monstrous roar like thunder,
A bull-of-Bashan sound.
The seas run high and the boats split asunder . . .
*I wonder what it feels like to be drowned?*

The thin soap slips
And slithers like a shark under the ships.
My toes are on the soap-dish—that's the effect
Of my huge storms; an iron steamer's wrecked.
The soap slides round and round;
He's biting the old sailors, I expect. . . .
*I wonder what it feels like to be drowned?*

## ESCAPE

(*August 6, 1916.* Officer Previously Reported Died of Wounds, Now Reported Wounded: Graves, Capt. R., Royal Welsh Fusiliers)

. . . But I *was* dead, an hour or more:
I woke when I'd already passed the door
That Cerberus guards and half-way down the road
To Lethe, as an old Greek sign-post showed.
Above me, on my stretcher swinging by,
I saw new stars in the sub-terrene sky,
A Cross, a Rose in Bloom, a Cage with Bars,
And a barbed Arrow feathered with fine stars.
I felt the vapors of forgetfulness
Float in my nostrils: Oh, may Heaven bless
Dear Lady Proserpine, who saw me wake
And, stooping over me, for Henna's sake
Cleared my poor buzzing head and sent me back
Breathless, with leaping heart along the track.

After me roared and clattered angry hosts
Of demons, heroes, and policemen-ghosts.
"Life, life! I can't be dead, I won't be dead:
Damned if I'll die for any one," I said . . .
Cerberus stands and grins above me now,
Wearing three heads, lion and lynx and sow.
"Quick, a revolver! but my Webley's gone,
Stolen . . . no bombs . . . no knife . . . (the crowd swarms on,
Bellows, hurls stones) . . . not even a honeyed sop . . .
Nothing . . . Good Cerberus . . . Good dog . . . But stop!
Stay! . . . A great luminous thought . . . I do believe
There's still some morphia that I bought on leave."
Then swiftly Cerberus' wide mouths I cram
With Army biscuit smeared with Tickler's jam;
And Sleep lurks in the luscious plum and apple.
He crunches, swallows, stiffens, seems to grapple
With the all-powerful poppy . . . then a snore,
A crash; the beast blocks up the corridor
With monstrous hairy carcase, red and dun—
Too late: for I've sped through.
O Life! O Sun!

## THE TRAVELER'S CURSE AFTER MISDIRECTION

(*From the Welsh*)

May they wander stage by stage
Of the same vain pilgrimage,
Stumbling on, age after age,
Night and day, mile after mile,
At each and every step, a stile;
At each and every stile, withal,
May they catch their feet and fall;
At each and every fall they take,
May a bone within them break;
And may the bones that break within
Not be, for variation's sake,
Now rib, now thigh, now arm, now shin,
But always, without fail, THE NECK.

## SONG: ONE HARD LOOK

Small gnats that fly
In hot July
And lodge in sleeping ears,
Can rouse therein
A trumpet's din
With Day of Judgment fears.

Small mice at night
Can wake more fright
Than lions at midday.
A straw will crack
The camel's back;
There is no easier way.

One smile relieves
A heart that grieves
Though deadly sad it be,
And one hard look
Can close the book
That lovers love to see.

## A FROSTY NIGHT

MOTHER:

Alice, dear, what ails you,
  Dazed and white and shaken?
Has the chill night numbed you?
  Is it fright you have taken?

ALICE:

Mother, I am very well,
  I felt never better,
Mother, do not hold me so,
  Let me write my letter.

MOTHER:

Sweet, my dear, what ails you?

ALICE:

No, but I am well;
The night was cold and frosty,
There's no more to tell.

MOTHER:

Aye, the night was frosty,
Coldly gaped the moon,
Yet the birds seemed twittering
Through green boughs of June.

Soft and thick the snow lay,
Stars danced in the sky.
Not all the lambs of May-day
Skip so bold and high.

Your feet were dancing, Alice,
Seemed to dance on air,
You looked a ghost or angel
In the starlight there.

Your eyes were frosted starlight,
Your heart fire and snow.
Who was it said, "I love you"?

ALICE:

Mother, let me go!

## IN THE WILDERNESS

Christ of His gentleness
Thirsting and hungering,
Walked in the wilderness;
Soft words of grace He spoke
Unto lost desert-folk
That listened wondering.
He heard the bitterns call
From ruined palace-wall,

Answered them brotherly.
He held communion
With the she-pelican
Of lonely piety.
Basilisk, cockatrice,
Flocked to his homilies,
With mail of dread device,
With monstrous barbèd slings,
With eager dragon-eyes;
Great bats on leathern wings
And poor blind broken things,
Foul in their miseries.
And ever with Him went,
Of all His wanderings
Comrade, with ragged coat,
Gaunt ribs—poor innocent—
Bleeding foot, burning throat,
The guileless old scapegoat;
For forty nights and days
Followed in Jesus' ways,
Sure guard behind Him kept,
Tears like a lover wept.

## A FORCED MUSIC

Of Love he sang, full hearted one,
But when the song was done,
The King demanded more,
Aye, and commanded more.
The boy found nothing for encore,
Words, melodies—none,
Ashamed the song's glad rise and plaintive fall
Had so charmed King and Queen and all.

He sang the same verse once again
But urging less Love's pain.
With altered time and key
He showed variety,
Seemed to refresh the harmony
Of his only strain,
So still the glad rise and the plaintive fall
Could charm the King, the Queen and all.

He of his song then wearying ceased,
But was not yet released:
The Queen's request was, "More,"
And her behest was "More."
He played of random notes some score,
Then suddenly let his twangling harp down fall
And fled in tears from King and Queen and all.

### LOST LOVE

His eyes are quickened so with grief,
He can watch a grass or leaf
Every instant grow; he can
Clearly through a flint wall see,
Or watch the startled spirit flee
From the throat of a dead man:
Across two counties he can hear,
And catch your words before you speak;
The woodlouse or the maggot's weak
Clamor rings in his sad ear;
And noise so slight it would surpass
Credence:—drinking sound of grass,
Worm-talk, clashing jaws of moth
Chumbling tiny holes in cloth:
The groan of ants who undertake
Gigantic loads for honor's sake,
Their sinews creak, their breath comes thin:
Whir of spiders when they spin,
And minute, whispering, mumbling, sighs
Of idle grubs and flies.
This man is quickened so with grief,
He wanders god-like or like thief
Inside and out, below, above,
Without relief seeking lost love.

## LOUIS GOLDING

Louis Golding was born in Manchester, in November, 1895, and received his early education at Manchester Grammar School. War found him in 1914, taking him to Macedonia and France,

where he was chiefly occupied with educational work in various armies. On his return to England in 1919, he published his first volume of poems, *Sorrow of War*, and in the same year pursued his studies at Oxford. A succeeding collection, *Shepherd Singing Ragtime* (1921), and a novel, *Forward From Babylon* (1921) appeared while he was still an undergraduate.

The two volumes of poems appeared in America as one book entitled *Prophet and Fool* (1923). *Seacoast of Bohemia*, a satiric fantasy, followed in the same year. Since that time, Golding has traveled extensively through Europe and the Mediterranean, publishing two colorful volumes of travel, *Sunward* (1924) and *Sicilian Noon* (1925). *Day of Atonement* (1925) is a return to the somber and impressive background of *Forward from Babylon.*

Two lighter novels proved more popular than Golding's intenser work; *Store of Ladies* (1927) and *The Miracle Boy* (1928) provided him with a following in America and prepared the way for his welcome there. His adventures in Palestine were recorded in *Many Ways to Zion* (1928).

As a poet, Golding is gifted with a romantic, sometimes a rhapsodic, vision. Anger and pity find a fitful if not always controlled voice in his prose no less than in his rhymes.

### PLOWMAN AT THE PLOW

He, behind the straight plow, stands
Stalwart; firm shafts in firm hands.

Naught he cares for wars and naught
For the fierce disease of thought.

Only for the winds, the sheer
Naked impulse of the year,

Only for the soil which stares
Clean into God's face, he cares.

In the stark might of his deed
There is more than art or creed;

In his wrist more strength is hid
Than the monstrous Pyramid;

Stauncher than stern Everest
Be the muscles of his breast;

Not the Atlantic sweeps a flood
Potent as the plowman's blood.

He, his horse, his plowshare, these
Are the only verities.

Dawn to dusk, with God he stands,
The Earth poised on his broad hands.

## THE SINGER OF HIGH STATE

On hills too harsh for firs to climb,
Where eagle dare not hatch her brood,
On the sheer peak of Solitude,
With anvils of black granite crude
He beats austerities of rhyme.

Such godlike stuff his spirit drinks,
He made great odes of tempest there.
The steel-winged eagle, if he dare
To cleave these tracts of frozen air,
Hearing such music, swoops and sinks.

Stark tumults, which no tense night awes,
Of godly love and titan hate
Down crags of song reverberate.
Held by the Singer of High State,
Battalions of the midnight pause.

On hills uplift from Space and Time,
On the sheer peak of Solitude,
With stars to give his furnace food,
On anvils of black granite crude
He beats austerities of rhyme.

## NIGHT ON THE FIELDS OF ENNA

(*Dove il sol tace.*—"Inferno")

Grass there doth not
Make reply faint as thought

To the bird-like din
Of the sun's cherubin.
And the birds themselves do
Blunder the branches through
Till the earth's root stains
With their knocked-out brains.
O the sun's silent and
Blood's on the land.
The birds die there
In the clotted air
And their wing-beats make no noise.
The four winds are lank lead
Suspended in a dead poise.
A scurf is on the mouth
Of west wind and south.
And the east and the north
Loll swollen tongues forth,
Into the blank immanence
Of the sun's silence.

Never Moloch and his peers,
Beelzebub, Ashtaroth,
So racked the cracked spheres
With the trumpets of their wrath
As this black hush hath rent
The collapsing firmament.

Dante, of thy charity
Restore sound unto sea,
Slake the winds their thirst.
Let the sun walk on
The split ramparts of this worst
Pandemonion.
Let the sun's cherubin,
Dante, once again begin
Their bird-like din.
Restore to birds their lost eyes,
To grass its little cries.

Leonard A. G. Strong was born on March 8, 1896, in the parish of Plympton, in Devon. "One of his parents" (to allow Mr. Strong to speak for himself) "is Irish, the other is half English and half Irish, so that he is fairly entitled to describe himself as a mongrel. He spent his childhood partly on Southern Dartmoor and partly on the borders between Dublin and Wicklow. From a preparatory school at Plymouth, he went with a scholarship to Brighton College, and thence, five years later, won an open Classical Scholarship at Wadham College, Oxford. Illness interrupting his career, he finally graduated in 1920 and now teaches at Summer Fields, a famous preparatory school near Oxford. Delicate health has confined him to a spectator's part in his favorite sports. Swimming is the only form of violent exercise he has been able to keep up—perhaps because, as legend has it, one of his ancestors, Teig Riarach O'Dowda, King of Connaught, captured and married a mermaid, thereby endowing his descendants with a taste for the sea!"

Strong is known in America chiefly through his *Dublin Days* (1921), a small volume of shrewd appraisals, in which satire nudges characterization. *The Lowery Road* (1923) depends for its effect less on humor and more on exaltation. Without sacrificing originality of speech, Strong summons the spirit of the English countryside in these terse Dartmoor lyrics. Besides the celebration of Strong's native Devon, the author has written poetry which is by no means local; his *Eight Poems*, privately distributed at Christmas 1923, show him capable of supporting himself in somewhat higher flights. Latterly Strong has distinguished himself as a shrewd compiler of anthologies of magazine verse. His first novel, *Dewer Rides*, was published in America as one of *Paper Books* in 1929, considerably enlarging his audience.

## RUFUS PRAYS

In the darkening church
  Where but a few had stayed
At the Litany Desk
  The idiot knelt and prayed.

Rufus, stunted, uncouth,
  The one son of his mother.
"Eh, I'd sooner 'ave Rufie,"
  She said, "than many another:

"'E's useful about the 'ouse,
And so gentle as 'e can be.
An' 'e gets up early o' mornin's
And makes me a cup o' tea."

The formal evensong
Had passed over his head:
He sucked his thumb, and squinted,
And dreamed, instead.

Now while the organ boomed
To the few who still were there,
At the Litany Desk
The idiot made his prayer:

"Gawd bless Mother,
'N make Rufie a good lad:
Take Rufie to Heaven
'N forgive him when 'e's bad.

"'N early mornin's in Heaven
'E'll make mother's tea,
'N a cup for the Lord Jesus
'N a cup for Thee."

## ZEKE

Gnarly and bent and deaf's a pos',
Pore old Ezekiel Purvis
Goeth crippin' slowly up the 'ill
To the Commoonion Survis.

And tappy, tappy up the haisle
Goeth stick and brassy ferule:
And Passen [1] 'ath to stoopy down
An' 'oller in ees yerole.

## AN OLD WOMAN, OUTSIDE THE ABBEY THEATER

In this Theayter they has plays
On us, and high-up people comes
And pays to see things playin' here
They'd run like hell from in the slums.

[1] Parson.

### THE MAD WOMAN OF PUNNET'S TOWN

A-swell within her billowed skirts
  Like a great ship with sails unfurled,
The mad woman goes gallantly
  Upon the ridges of her world.

With eagle nose and wisps of gray
  She strides upon the westward hills,
Swings her umbrella joyously
  And waves it to the waving mills.

Talking and chuckling as she goes
  Indifferent both to sun and rain,
With all that merry company:
  The singing children of her brain.

### LOWERY COT

This is the house where Jesse White
Run staring in one misty night,
And said he seed the Holy Ghost
Out to Lowery finger-post.

Said It rised up like a cloud
Muttering to Itself out loud,
And stood tremendous on the hill
While all the breathing world was still.

They put en shivering to bed,
And in three days the man was dead.
Gert solemn visions such as they
Be overstrong for mortal clay.

## EDMUND BLUNDEN

Edmund (C.) Blunden was born in 1896, and educated at Queen's College, Oxford. During the War he served as lieutenant in the Royal Sussex Regiment, his bucolic poems being a direct revulsion from his experiences as a soldier. In 1916 he published three small volumes of pastorals which appeared as one book, *The Wagoner and other Poems*, in 1920. In the same year, he

edited, with Alan Porter, *The Poems of John Clare*, most of the verses being deciphered from a mass of old manuscript. Two years later, he published *The Shepherd* (1922), it being awarded the Hawthornden Prize for that year. He was Professor of English Literature at Tokio University from 1924 to 1927.

The most casual glance at his volumes discloses the fact that Blunden's use of the pastoral note is not, as it is with some of his contemporaries, a mere literary device. Here, the verse is gnarled and twisted as the bent trees of which he loves to write; there is rude country air in his lines and even the words have the smell of apple orchards. It has been objected that Blunden depends too often on unusual and obsolescent terms, but—as Robert Bridges wrote in a pamphlet on *The Dialectical Words in Blunden's Poems* (1921)—"his poetry cannot be imagined without them, and the strength and beauty of the effects must be estimated in his successes and not in his failures."

Blunden's subsequent poetry is milder; a softness but not a flabbiness of texture clothes *To Nature* (1923), *Masks of Time* (1925) and *Retreat* (1928). These verses, lacking the earthy flavor of the early poems, lose the spiciness that dialect confers, but they retain the contemplative quality of Blunden's mind and a dignity which inheres both in the tradition and in the man. *Near and Far* (1929), on the other hand, is composed of pretty trifles which can do Blunden's reputation no good. The contents, betraying a monotonous solemnity, are, as Peter Quennell remarked, "a drowsy methodical grinding out of familiar tunes."

In spite of his attainments, Blunden remained known to only a small circle until 1929. In that year he published his large prose work, *Undertones of War*, which was received with instant enthusiasm in Europe and America and took its place among such vivid anti-militaristic documents as Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Zweig's *The Case of Sergeant Grischa*, Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, and E. E. Cummings' *The Enormous Room*.

For the definitions appended to the following poems, thanks must be given to the late Robert Bridges, whose skill as etymologist can scarcely be overrated.

## THE POOR MAN'S PIG

Already fallen plum-bloom stars the green
And apple-boughs as knarred [1] as old toads' backs
Wear their small roses ere a rose is seen;
The building-thrush watches old Job who stacks

[1] *Knarred*, a word meaning "wrinkled," is a country-cousin to our "gnarled."

The bright-peeled osiers on the sunny fence,
  The pent sow grunts to hear him stumping by,
And tries to push the bolt and scamper thence,
  But her ringed snout still keeps her to the sty.

Then out he lets her run; away she snorts
  In bundling gallop for the cottage door,
With hungry hubbub begging crusts and orts.[1]
  Then like a whirlwind bumping round once more;
Nuzzling the dog, making the pullets run,
  And sulky as a child when her play's done.

## A COUNTRY GOD

When groping farms are lanterned up
  And stolchy[2] plowlands hid in grief,
And glimmering byroads catch the drop
  That weeps from sprawling twig and leaf,
And heavy-hearted spins the wind
  Among the tattered flags of Mirth,—
Then who but I flit to and fro,
With shuddering speech, with mope and mow,
  And glass the eyes of earth?

Then haunt I by some moaning brook
  Where lank and snaky brambles swim,
Or where the hill pines swartly look
  I whirry[3] through the dark and hymn
A dull-voiced dirge and threnody,
  An echo of the sad world's drone
That now appals the friendly stars—
O wail for blind brave youth, whose wars
  Turn happiness to stone.

[1] *Orts* are fragments or scraps of refuse.

[2] *Stolchy* is such an excellent onomatopoetic word that it scarcely needs explanation. But there is an old English verb *stolch:* "to tread down in wet land or mud."

[3] *Whirry* is another sound-word, not to be confused with "worry." It means "to fly rapidly with noise"—a combination of "whir" and "hurry."

How rang the cavern-shades of old
To my melodious pipes, and then
My bright-haired bergomask patrolled
Each lawn and plot for laughter's din:
Never a sower flung broadcast,
No hedger brished [1] nor scythesman swung,
Nor maiden trod the purpling press,
But I was by to guard and bless
And for their solace sung.

. . . . . .

But now the sower's hand is writhed
In livid death, the bright rhythm stolen,
The gold grain flatted and unscythed,
The boars in the vineyard, gnarled and sullen,
Havocking the grapes; and the pouncing wind
Spins the spattered leaves of the glen
In a mockery dance, death's hue-and-cry;
With all my murmurous pipes flung by
And summer not to come again.

## THE BARN

Rain-sunken roof, grown green and thin
For sparrows' nests and starlings' nests;
Disheveled eaves; unwieldy doors,
Cracked rusty pump, and oaken floors,
And idly-penciled names and jests
Upon the posts within.

The light pales at the spider's lust,
The wind tangs [2] through the shattered pane:
An empty hop-poke spreads across
The gaping frame to mend the loss
And keeps out sun as well as rain,
Mildewed with clammy dust.

The smell of apples stored in hay
And homely cattle-cake is there.

[1] *Brished* is country dialect for "brush"—principally used in connection with trimming trees and hedges.

[2] *Tangs*—an old term (differing from our word meaning "taste") denoting a barb or a sting. Blunden uses it here as a verb.

Use and disuse have come to terms,
The walls are hollowed out by worms,
But men's feet keep the mid-floor bare
And free from worse decay.

All merry noise of hens astir
Or sparrows squabbling on the roof
Comes to the barn's broad open door;
You hear upon the stable floor
Old hungry Dapple strike his hoof,
And the blue fan-tail's whir.

The barn is old, and very old,
But not a place of spectral fear.
Cobwebs and dust and speckling sun
Come to old buildings every one.
Long since they made their dwelling here,
And here you may behold

Nothing but simple wane and change;
Your tread will wake no ghost, your voice
Will fall on silence undeterred.
No phantom wailing will be heard,
Only the farm's blithe cheerful noise;
The barn is old, not strange.

## EASTERN TEMPEST

This flying angel's torrent cry
Will hurl the mountains through the sky!
A wind like fifty winds at once
Through the bedragoned kingdom runs,
And hissing rain slants icy stings
At many a wretch afield who clings
His cloak of straw, with glistening spines
Like a prodigious porcupine's.
The reptile grasses by his path
Wind sleek as unction from that Wrath
Which with its glassy claw uproots
The broad-leaved *kiri*, flays and loots
Torn and sprung sinews, leaves for dead
The young crops with the shining head,

While blotched blunt melons darkly dot
The slaughtered swathes like cannon-shot.
The lotus in the pond upheaves
Its sacred, slow, appealing leaves,
And many a bush with wrestling jerk
Defies the demon's murderous work—
Yet nature stares white-lipped, to read
In Chance's eye what desperate deed?
A kinder god discerns, replies,
And stills the land's storm-shouts to sighs;
The clouds in massy folds apart
Disclose the day's bright bleeding heart,
Huge plumes and scarves black-tossing wide
As if a Kubla Khan had died!
From flame to flame the vision glows,
Till all the pools of heaven unclose
The lotus-light, the hue, the balm
Of wisdom infinitely calm.

## SACHEVERELL SITWELL

Sacheverell Sitwell, brother of Edith and Osbert Sitwell, was born in 1897 at Scarborough and educated at Eton. As soon as he was of military age, he joined the Grenadier Guards as second lieutenant. After the War he attended Balliol College, Oxford, for a short time, but came to London before completing his courses, confining his activities to literature.

From the first, his poetry was experimental, but even the early *The People's Palace* contained his particular gesture. *The Hundred and One Harlequins* (1922) and *The Thirteenth Caesar* (1924) are less dependent on his influences, although the accents of such dissimilar poets as Vachel Lindsay and T. S. Eliot arise from his pages. Here the youngest of the Sitwells displays a lively imagination, a delight in toying with the subject as well as distorting it, a glittering if sometimes too self-conscious cleverness.

His more recent work shows him milder in manner and idiom. Less distinctive than his strepitant sister and brother, he seems to be developing a more traditional vein. His larger efforts would seem to dispute this; "Canons of Giant Art" and "Doctor Donne and Gargantua" are exercises in the approved modern manner. But they are not the poet. Try as he will with all the resources

of the brain, his art is not in them. His art (and for that matter his heart) finds its response in unaffected song, a group of twenty-five lyrics being the core of *The Cyder Feast* (1927). Apart from a dissonance or two, an inverted image, a strained or dislocated adjective, these horticultural verses might have been written in the eighteenth century.

It is curious to note how the more modern "modernists" turn their eyes not to formless futurism, but to a precise past. Thus we find T. S. Eliot rediscovering Dryden and Lancelot Andrewes, Humbert Wolfe looting the Greek Anthology, Edith Sitwell turning from Gertrude Stein and Dr. Steiner to pen an introduction to the didactic rhymes of Jane Taylor. And here, in *The Cyder Feast*, in the midst of the "alchemy of dank leaves," one finds the youngest Sitwell writing "Four Variations upon William Browne of Tavistock," "Variation on a Theme by Robert Herrick," "Variation upon a Couplet of Alexander Pope," "An Adaptation from John Milton." Moreover most of the poems not adapted or "varied" betray accents of a period that is scarcely Sitwellian. "Tulip Tree" and "Kingcups" are two examples among many.

The irruption of a kind of architectural fancy is not unnatural in one who has established himself as an ardent appraiser if not an authority on the genesis of the rococo, embodied in his three volumes *Southern Baroque Art* (1924), *German Baroque Art* (1927) and *The Gothick North* (1929).

### FOUNTAINS

This night is pure and clear as thrice refinèd silver.
Silence, the cape of Death, lies heavy
Round the bare shoulders of the hills.
Faint throbs and murmurs
At moments growing to a mutter, then subsiding,
Fill the night with mystery and panic.
The honey-tongued arguings of fountains
Stir the air with flutes and gentle voices.

The graven fountain-masks suffer and weep—
Curved with a smile, the poor mouths
Clutch at a half-remembered song
Striving to forget the agony of ever laughing,—
Laughing while they hear the secrets
Echoed from the depths of Earth beneath them.

This half-remembered song—
This flow of sad-restrainèd laughter
Jars with the jets of youthful water
Springing from the twisted masks,
For this is but the birth of water;
And singing joyfully
It springs upon the world
And wanders ceaselessly
Along its jeweled valleys to the sea,
Rattling like rolls of drums
The shells and pebbles down its bed.

The endless argument of water ceases,
A few drops fall heavily, splashing on the marble:
A Sultan with his treasures
Seeking to gain the goodwill of his love,
Pouring before her chains of crackling pearls
And weeping heavy jealous tears
Because she will not heed him.

## THE RED-GOLD RAIN

*(Orange Tree by Day)*

Sun and rain at work together
Ripened this for summer weather;
Sun gave it color tawny red
And rain its life as though it bled;
In the long days full of fire
Its fruit will cool us when we tire.
Against the house-wall does it grow
With smooth stem like a fountain's flow,
Dark are its leaves, a colder shade
Than ever rock or mountain made;
When the wind plays soft they sing,
For here the bird's songs never ring,
Quite still the fruit that in a golden shower
Will fall one day to flood this tower.

## "PSITTACHUS EOIS IMITATRIX ALES AB INDIS"—*Ovid*

The parrot's voice snaps out—
No good to contradict—
What he says he'll say again:
Dry facts, like biscuits,—

His voice and vivid colors
Of his breast and wings
Are immemorably old;
Old dowagers dressed in crimpèd satin
Boxed in their rooms
Like specimens beneath a glass
Inviolate—and never changing,
Their memory of emotions dead;
The ardor of their summers
Sprayed like camphor
On their silken parasols
Intissued in a cupboard.

Reflective, but with never a new thought
The parrot sways upon his ivory perch—
Then gravely turns a somersault
Through rings nailed in the roof—
Much as the sun performs his antics
As he climbs the aerial bridge
We only see
Through crystal prisms in a falling rain.

## TULIP TREE

Whose candles light the tulip tree?
What is this subtle alchemy,
That builds an altar in one night
And touches the green boughs with light?
Look at the shaped leaves below
And see the scissor-marks they show,
As if a tailor had cut fine
The marking of their every line!

These are no leaves of prudery
Hiding what all eyes should see;
No Adam and no Eve lie hid
Below this leafy coverlid:
The long limbs of that flower-hid girl
Would need no leaves to twist and curl,
The markings of that leaf-hid boy
Want no flowers to mar and cloy.

And so these cut leaves and their lights
Live only for the tulip-rites
At this altar of bright fires
Sweet-scented lest their ardor tires;
Leaf, and flower, and scent are all
Alive for this lit interval:
Between two winters are they born
To make great summer seem forlorn.

### KINGCUPS

When poetry walked the live, spring wood,
Hid, ghostlike, in the leaves' green hood
She came to a slant fence of sun,
Whose golden timbers, one by one,
Trod into a marsh's toils
And here she stayed her flowery spoils;
But pitying the marshes' plight
She shook her lap and wide and bright
Great kingcups to that waste she threw
Where nothing lived and nothing grew;
Now, where poetry passed, there stays
The light of suns, the fire of days,
And these cups for kings to hold
Make summer with their wide-eyed gold.

## EDGELL RICKWORD

Edgell Rickword was born at Colchester, October 22, 1898, and, before he was twenty, contributed to *Oxford Poetry*. His first volume, *Behind the Eyes* (1921), gives evidence of a talent whose visual sensibility matches a delicately precise mind. After a series

of reviews for *The New Statesman*, Rickword published his excellent study of the remarkable French boy-poet *Rimbaud* (1924), and edited *The Calendar of Modern Letters* from 1925 to 1927.

### INTIMACY

Since I have seen you do those intimate things
That other men but dream of; lull asleep
The sinister dark forest of your hair,
And tie the bows that stir on your calm breast
Faintly as leaves that shudder in their sleep.
Since I have seen your stocking swallow up,
A swift black wind, the pale flame of your foot,
And deemed your slender limbs so meshed in silk
Sweet mermaid sisters drowned in their dark hair,
I have not troubled overmuch with food,
And wine has seemed like water from a well;
Pavements are built of fire, grass of thin flames.
All other girls grow dull as painted flowers
Or flutter harmlessly like colored flies
Whose wings are tangled in the net of leaves
Spread by frail trees that grow behind the eyes.

## RICHARD HUGHES

Richard Hughes was born in 1900 of a Welsh family settled in England. He was educated at Charterhouse School and Oriel College, Oxford, his first play, *The Sisters' Tragedy*, being produced in London in 1922 while Hughes was still an undergraduate. In the same year, his first volume of poems, *Gypsy-Night*, appeared and before he graduated he was poetry-critic to the London *Saturday Westminster* and contributor to leading periodicals. He traveled extensively in Europe, North Africa and America, often on foot, and has, he confesses, "a slight amateur knowledge of Balkan revolutions and seamanship."

Hughes began his career as a poet although his reputation was made by two dramas. The first of these has been mentioned; the other, composed in his twenties, was a comedy praised by Shaw and selected with works of Chekhov and Pirandello as "one of the three most important productions in London in seven years."

*Gipsy-Night* (1922) marked the début of a poet with acute sensibility, a precocious apprehension emphasized by the short

stories in *A Moment of Time* (1925). After a silence of three years, Hughes published his first full-length novel, *The Innocent Voyage* (1929), published in England as *A High Wind in Jamaica.* This tale is an accomplishment in an untried genre. Upon a basis of traditional melodrama, including pirates and kidnaping, Hughes has constructed a story wholly unexpected, an unromantic romance, where the psychological reënforces the fantastic and where the union of cut-throats and children is convincing, delicate and, at the same time, horrible. Modern writing has produced several techniques for dealing fancifully with the commonplace; Hughes has developed a realistic way of handling the extraordinary.

This gift of familiarizing the unusual is of paramount service to his poetry. Chekhov counseled writers to cease being insincere about the moon and say what they really felt about a rain-puddle. But, Hughes implies, one can also be actual, faithful to subject and self, when writing about the moon, or the mad immortal unicorn, or the elephant-swallowing roc, or inditing meditative and ecstatic odes to vision, or transfixing the windlike passing of Time. Such subjects brighten the pages of *Confessio Juvenis* (1926) which, as its title indicates, collects Hughes' early work. But if it is a poet's eye which rolls toward these strangenesses, it is his mind which carries them off in a fine frenzy.

Besides three privately printed volumes, Hughes is the author of some seven volumes. His collected *Plays* were issued in 1928 and his edition of John Skelton's poems appeared in 1924.

### INVOCATION TO THE MUSE

Fair maiden, fair maiden,
  Come spin for me:
Come spin till you're laden
  Though hard it may be.

'Tis an honor and glory
  To be a king's maid,
Though (I'll not tell a story)
  You won't be well paid.

*Aetat. 6*

### TRAMP

(*The Bath Road, June*)

When a brass sun staggers above the sky,
When feet cleave to boots, and the tongue's dry,

And sharp dust goads the rolling eye
Come thoughts of wine and dancing thoughts of girls:
They shiver their white arms, and the head whirls,
And noon light is hid in their dark curls;
Then noon feet stumble, and head swims,
Till out shines the sun, and the thought dims;
And death, for blood, runs in the weak limbs.

To fall on flints in the shade of tall nettles
Gives easy sleep as a bed of rose petals,
And dust drifting from the highway
As light a coverlet as down may.
The myriad feet of many-sized flies
May not open those tired eyes.

But the first wind of night
Twitches the coverlet away quite:
The first wind and large first rain,
Flickers the dry pulse to life again,
Flickers the lids burning on the eyes:
Come sudden flashes of the slipping skies:
Hunger, oldest visionary,
Hides a devil in a tree,
Hints a glory in the clouds,
Fills the crooked air with crowds
Of ivory sightless demons singing—
Eyes start: straightens back:
Limbs stagger and crack:
But brain flies, brain soars
Up, where the Sky roars
Upon the backs of cherubim:
Brain rockets up to Him.
Body gives another twist
To the slack waist-band;
In agony clenches fist
Till the nails bite the hand.
Body floats light as air,
With rain in its sparse hair.

Brain returns; and he would tell
The things he has seen well:

But Body will not stir his lips:
So Mind and Body come to grips
And deadly each hates the other
As his treacherous blood-brother.

Yet no sight, no sound shows
How the struggle goes.

I sink at last faint in the wet gutter;
So many words to speak that the tongue cannot utter.

## LOVER'S REPLY TO GOOD ADVICE

Could you bid an acorn
When in earth it heaves
On Time's backward wing be borne
To forgotten leaves:
Could you quiet Noah's flood
To an essence rare,
Or bid the roaring wind
Confine in his lair:

Could round the iron shell
When the spark was in it
Hold gun-powder so well
That it never split:
Had you reins for the sun,
And curb and spur,
Held you God in a net
So He might not stir:

Then might you take this thing,
Then strangle it, kill:
By weighing, considering,
Conform it to will:
As man denied his Christ
Deny it, mock, betray—
But being Seed, Wind, God,
It bears all away.

### ON TIME

Unhurried as a snake I saw Time glide
Out of the shape of his material frame:
I, who am part of Time's material name,
Saw that unhurried serpent quietly slide
Through a straight crack in his material side
Between a prince and a stone: flicker, and presently coil,
A small bright worm about a stalk of fennel;
While light stood still as spar, and smell
Spread like a fan, sound hung festooned, and toil
Rose balanced and patterned like a storied palace
Whose wild tons grapple in immovable grace;
While laughter sat on a rustic seat with tears
And watched the corn-sheaves lean across the plow:
Ah! then what wind across the nodding years!
What ecstasies upon the bough
Sang, like a fountain to its peers:
And in the meadows what deep-rooted men
Flowered their lovely faces in the grass,
Where death, like a butterfly of dark-colored glass,
Flitted and sipped, and sipped again!

## ROY CAMPBELL

Roy Campbell was born in Durban, Natal, South Africa, in 1902. After marriage to Mary Garman in 1922, he became active—evidently too active—in South African affairs, for in 1926 he was compelled to come to England where he has since lived.

*The Flaming Terrapin* appeared in 1922. It was at once apparent that a poet of unusual vitality had come out of the Colonies. Campbell had chosen a huge theme and he had sufficient vigor to cope with it. The poem is a broad allegory: The ark of Noah plunges through terror and tempest carrying with it all of humanity. But, unlike the Biblical vessel, this ark does not merely float; it is pulled along, swept to its far goal by a tremendous saurian, a blood brother to Leviathan, the Flaming Terrapin, which is the symbol of the all-suffering, all-surviving power of persistence. It is this monster, the life-force, which brings the ark to a richer Ararat and (by implication) will bring mankind to a larger existence.

So much for the theme. The reader, however, is scarcely aware of the philosophic content, for the lines sweep him on at such a pace that he is conscious of little except the momentum of the verse, the bright concatenation of figures, and a general feeling of exuberance. The headlong speed may be accounted a vice, but Campbell's poetic vices and virtues are inseparable. Both proceed from prodigality; epithet and emotion rush forward in continual and creative excitement.

*The Wayzgoose* (1928) is a more local and less arousing work. Satirizing conditions in South Africa, it limits not only Campbell's audience but his own spirit, for this poet needs amplitude for his effects. The subsequent poetry is in the early, gustier vein. "Tristan Da Cunha" and "The Palm" display less alacrity and violence than *The Flaming Terrapin*, but contain much of its lavish energy. "The Palm" is particularly successful in its combinations of assonance and interior rhyming. In addition, the new poems have a condensed power, a sense of reserve which argues well for Campbell's future.

### TRISTAN DA CUNHA

Snore in the foam: the night is vast and blind,
The blanket of the mist around your shoulders,
Sleep your old sleep of rock, snore in the wind,
Snore in the spray! The storm your slumber lulls,
His wings are folded on your nest of bowlders
As on their eggs the gray wings of your gulls.

No more as when, ten thousand years ago,
You hissed a giant cinder from the ocean—
Around your rocks you furl the shawling snow,
Half sunk in your own darkness, vast and grim,
And round you on the deep with surly motion
Pivot your league-long shadow as you swim.

Why should you haunt me thus but that I know
My surly heart is in your own displayed,
Round whom such wastes in endless circuit flow,
Whose hours in such a gloomy compass run—
A dial with its league-long arm of shade
Slowly revolving to the moon and sun.

My heart has sunk, like your gray fissured crags,
By its own strength o'ertoppled and betrayed:
I too have burned the wind with fiery flags,
Who now am but a roost for empty words—
An island of the sea whose only trade
Is in the voyages of its wandering birds.

Did you not, when your strength became your pyre,
Deposed and tumbled from your flaming tower,
Awake in gloom from whence you sank in fire
To find Antaeus-like, more vastly grown,
A throne in your own darkness, and a power
Sheathed in the very coldness of your stone?

Your strength is that you have no hope or fear,
You march before the world without a crown:
The nations call you back, you do not hear:
The cities of the earth grow gray behind you,
You will be there when their great flames go down
And still the morning in the van will find you.

You march before the continents: you scout
In front of all the earth: alone you scale
The masthead of the world, a lorn look-out,
Waving the snowy flutter of your spray
And gazing back in infinite farewell
To suns that sink, and shores that fade away.

From your gray tower what long regrets you fling
To where, along the low horizon burning,
The great swan-breasted seraphs soar and sing,
And suns go down, and trailing splendors dwindle,
And sails on lonely errands unreturning,
Glow with a gold no sunrise can rekindle.

Turn to the Night, these flames are not for you
Whose steeple for the thunder swings its bells:
Gray Memnon, to the tempest only true,
Turn to the night, turn to the shadowing foam,
And let your voice, the saddest of farewells,
With sullen curfew toll the gray wings home.

The wind your mournful syren haunts the gloom:
The rocks, spray-clouded, are your signal-guns
Whose stony niter, puffed with flying spume,
Rolls forth in grim salute your broadside hollow,
Over the gorgeous burials of suns,
To sound the tocsin of the storms that follow.

Plunge forward; like a ship to battle hurled,
Slip the long cables of the failing light,
The level rays that moor you to the world:
Sheathed in your armor of eternal frost,
Plunge forward, in the thunder of the fight
To lose yourself as I would fain be lost.

Exiled, like you, and severed from my race
By the cold ocean of my own disdain,
Do I not freeze in such a wintry space,
Do I not travel through a storm as vast
And rise at times, victorious from the main,
To fly the sunrise at my shattered mast?

Your path is but a desert where you reap
Only the bitter knowledge of your soul,
You fish with nets of seaweed in the deep
As fruitlessly as I with nets of rhyme,
Yet forth you stride: yourself the way, the goal,
The surges are your strides, your path is time.

Hurled by what aim to what tremendous range!
A missile from the great sling of the past
Your passage leaves its track of death and change
And ruin on the world: you fly beyond,
Leaping the current of the ages vast
As lightly as a pebble skims a pond.

The years are undulations in your flight
Whose awful motion we can only guess:
Too swift for sense, too terrible for sight,
We only know how fast behind you darken
Our days like lonely beacons of distress:
We know that you stride on and will not hearken.

Now in the eastern sky the fairest planet
Pierces the dying wave with dangled spear,
And in the whirring hollows of your granite
That vaster Sea, to which you are a shell,
Sighs with a ghostly rumor like the drear
Moan of the nightwind in a hollow cell.

We shall not meet again: over the wave
Our ways divide, and yours is straight and endless—
But mine is short and crooked to the grave:
Yet what of these dark crowds, amid whose flow
I battle like a rock, aloof and friendless—
Are not their generations, vague and endless,
The waves, the strides, the feet on which I go?

## FROM "THE FLAMING TERRAPIN"

### *Part I*

Maternal Earth stirs redly from beneath
Her blue sea-blanket and her quilt of sky,
A giant Anadyomene from the sheath
And chrysalis of darkness; till we spy
Her vast barbaric haunches, furred with trees,
Stretched on the continents, and see her hair
Combed in a surf of fire along the breeze
To curl about the dim sierras, where
Faint snow-peaks catch the sun's far-swiveled beams:
And, tinder to his rays, the mountain-streams
Kindle, and volleying with a thunder-stroke
Out of their roaring gullies, burst in smoke
To shred themselves as fine as women's hair,
And hoop gay rainbows on the sunlit air.
Winnowed by radiant eagles, in whose quills
Sing the swift gales, and on whose waving plumes
Flashing sunbeams ignite—the towering hills
Yearn to the sun, rending the misty fumes
That clogged their peaks, and from each glistening spire
Fling to the winds their rosy fleece of fire.
Far out to sea the gales with savage sweep

Churning the water, waken drowsy fins
Huge fishes to propel from monstrous sleep,
That spout their pride as the red day begins,
"We are the great volcanoes of the deep!"
Now up from the intense creative Earth
Spring her strong sons: the thunder of their mirth
Vibrates upon the shining rocks and spills
In floods of rolling music on the hills.
Action and flesh cohere in one clean fusion
Of force with form: the very ethers breed
Wild harmonies of song: the frailest reed
Holds shackled thunder in its heart's seclusion.
And every stone that lines my lonely way,
Sad tongueless nightingale without a wing,
Seems on the point of rising up to sing
And donning scarlet for its dusty gray!

How often have I lost this fervent mood,
And gone down dingy thoroughfares to brood
On evils like my own from day to day;
"Life is a dusty corridor," I say,
"Shut at both ends." But far across the plain,
Old Ocean growls and tosses his gray mane,
Pawing the rocks in all his old unrest
Or lifting lazily on some white crest
His pale foam-feathers for the moon to burn—
Then to my veins I feel new sap return,
Strength tightens up my sinews long grown dull,
And in the old charred crater of the skull
Light strikes the slow somnambulistic mind
And sweeps her forth to ride the rushing wind,
And stamping on the hill-tops high in air,
To shake the golden bonfire of her hair.

This sudden strength that catches up men's souls
And rears them up like giants in the sky,
Giving them fins where the dark ocean rolls,
And wings of eagles when the whirlwinds fly,
Stands visible to me in its true self
(No spiritual essence of wing'd elf

Like Ariel on the empty winds to spin).
I see him as a mighty Terrapin,
Rafting whole islands on his stormy back,
Built of strong metals molten from the black
Roots of the inmost earth: a great machine,
Thoughtless and fearless, governing the clean
System of active things: the winds and currents
Are his primeval thoughts: the raging torrents
Are moods of his, and men who do great deeds
Are but the germs his awful fancy breeds.

For when the winds have ceased their ghostly speech
And the long waves roll moaning from the beach,
The Flaming Terrapin that towed the Ark
Rears up his hump of thunder on the dark,
And like a mountain, seamed with rocky scars,
Crinkles white rings, as from its ancient sleep
Into a foam of life he wakes the Deep.
His was the crest that from the angry sky
Tore down the hail: he made the bowlders fly
Like balls of paper, splintered icebergs, hurled
Lassoes of dismal smoke around the world,
And like a bunch of crisp and crackling straws,
Coughed the sharp lightning from his craggy jaws.
His was the eye that blinked beyond the hill
After the fury of the flood was done,
And breaching from the bottom, cold and still,
Leviathan reared up to greet the Sun.
Perched on the stars around him in the air,
White angels rinsed the moonlight from their hair,
And the drowned trees into new flowers unfurled
As it sank dreaming down upon the world.
As he rolled by, all evil things grew dim.
The Devil, who had scoffed, now slunk from him
And sat in Hell, dejected and alone,
Rasping starved teeth against an old dry bone.

Before the coral reared its sculptured fern
Or the pale shellfish, swinging in the waves
With pointed steeples, had begun to turn
The rocks to shadowy cities—from dark caves

The mixed and drowsy poisons of the sea
Mixed their corrosive strength with horny stones,
And coaxed new substances from them to be
The ponderous material of his bones.
The waves by slow erosion did their part
Shaping his heavy bonework from the mass,
And in that pillared temple grew a heart
That branched with mighty veins, through which to pass
His blood, that, filtering the tangled mesh,
Built walls of gristle, clogged each hollow gap
With concrete vigor, till through bone and flesh
Flowed the great currents of electric sap.
While thunder clanging from the cloudy rack
With elemental hammers fierce and red,
Tempered the heavy target of his back,
And forged the brazen anvil of his head.

Freed from the age-long agonies of birth
This living galleon oars himself along
And roars his triumph over all the earth
Until the sullen hills burst into song.
His beauty makes a summer through the land,
And where he crawls upon the solid ground,
Gigantic flowers, exploding from the sand,
Spread fans of blinding color all around.
His voice has roused the amorphous mud to life—
Dust thinks: and tired of spinning in the wind,
Stands up to be a man and feel the strife
Of brute-thoughts in the jungle of his mind.
Bellerophon, the primal cowboy, first
Heard that wild summons on the stillness burst,
As, from the dusty mesa leaping free,
He slewed his white-winged broncho out to sea,
And shaking loose his flaming coils of hair,
Shot whistling up the smooth blue roads of air:
As he rose up, the moon with slanted ray
Ruled for those rapid hoofs a shining way,
And streaming from their caves, the sirens came
Riding on seals to follow him: the flame
Of their moon-tinseled limbs had flushed the dim
Green depths, and as when winds in Autumn skim

Gold acres, rustling plume with fiery plume,
Their long hair flickered skyward in the gloom,
Tossed to the savage rhythms of their tune.
Till, far across the world, the rising moon
Heard, ghost-like, in the embered evening sky
Their singing fade into a husky sigh,
And splashed with stars and dashed with stinging spray
The dandy of the prairies rode away!

That voice on Samson's mighty sinews rang
As on a harp's tense chords: each fiber sang
In all his being: rippling their strings of fire,
His nerves and muscles, like a wondrous lyre,
Vibrated to that sound; and through his brain
Proud thoughts came surging in a gorgeous train.
He rose to action, slew the grumbling bear,
Hauled forth the flustered lion from its lair
And swung him yelping skyward by the tail:
Tigers he mauled, with tooth and ripping nail
Rending their straps of fire, and from his track
Slithering like quicksilver, pouring their black
And liquid coils before his pounding feet,
He drove the livid mambas of deceit.
Oppression, like a starved hyena, sneaked
From his loud steps: Tyranny, vulture-beaked,
Rose clapping iron wings, and in a cloud
Of smoke and terror, wove its own dark shroud,
As he strode by and in his tossing hair,
Rippled with sunshine, sang the morning air.

Like a great bell clanged in the winds of Time,
Linking the names of heroes chime by chime
That voice rolled on, and as it filled the night
Strong men rose up, thrilled with the huge delight
Of their own energy. Upon the snows
Of Ararat gigantic Noah rose,
Stiffened for fierce exertion, like the thong
That strings a bow before its arrow strong
Sings on the wind; and from his great fists hurled
Red thunderbolts to purify the world.

## THE PALM

Blistered and dry was the desert I trod
When out of the sky with the step of a god,
Victory-vanned with her feathers out-fanned,
The palm tree alighting my journey delayed
And spread me, inviting, her carpet of shade.
Vain were evasions, though urgent my quest,
And there as the guests of her lovely persuasions
To lie in the shade of her branches was best.
Like a fountain she played, spilling plume over plume in
A golden cascade for the winds to illumine,
Ascending in brilliance and falling in shade,
And spurning the ground with a tiptoe resilience
Danced to the sound of the music she made.
Her voice intervened on my shadowed seclusion
Like the whispered intrusion of seraph or fiend,
In its tone was the hiss of the serpent's wise tongue,
But soft as the kiss of a lover it stung—
"Unstrung is your lute? For despair are you silent?
Am I not an island in oceans as mute?
Around me the thorns of the desert take root;
Though I spring from the rock of a region accurst,
Yet fair is the daughter of hunger and thirst
Who sings like the water the valleys have nursed,
And rings her blue shadow as deep and as cool
As the heavens of azure that sleep on a pool.
And you, who so soon by the toil were undone,
Could you guess through what horrors my beauty had won
Ere I crested the noon as the bride of the sun?
The roots are my anchor struck fast in the hill,
The higher I hanker, the deeper they drill,
Through the red mortar their claws interlock
To ferret the water through warrens of rock.
Each inch of my glory was wrenched with a groan,
Corroded with fire from the base of my throne
And drawn like a wire from the heart of a stone:
Though I soar in the height with a shape of delight
Uplifting my stem like the string of a kite,
Yet still must each grade of my climbing be told
And still from the summit my measure I hold,

Sounding the azure with plummet of gold,
Partaking the strain of the heavenward pride
That soars me away from the earth I deride;
Though my stem be a rein that would tether me down
And fasten a chain on the height of my crown,
Yet through its tense nerve do I measure my might,
The strain of its curb is the strength of my flight:
And when by the hate of the hurricane blown
It doubles its forces with fibers that groan,
Exulting I ride in the tower of my pride
To feel that the strength of the blast is my own. . . .
Rest under my branches, breathe deep of my balm
From the hushed avalanches of fragrance and calm,
For suave is the silence that poises the palm.

The wings of the egrets are silken and fine,
But hushed with the secrets of Eden are mine:
Your spirit that grieves like the wind in my leaves
Shall be robbed of its care by those whispering thieves
To study my patience and hear, the day long,
The soft foliations of sand into song—
For bitter and cold though it rasp to my root,
Each atom of gold is the chance of a fruit,
The sap is the music, the stem is the flute,
And the leaves are the wings of the seraph I shape
Who dances, who springs in a golden escape,
Out of the dust and the drought of the plain,
To sing with the silver hosannahs of rain."

## FREDERICK C. BODEN

Frederick C. Boden was born May 17, 1902, in Bogthorpe Road, Chesterfield. The son of a goods-porter on the L.M.S., he attended the Chesterfield Elementary School till the beginning of his 'teens and at thirteen became a miner. When his first volume was published at the age of twenty-four, Boden was still working at the pit-head, having chosen the night-shift which gave him time for reading by daylight.

Guy N. Pocock happened to see a few verses by the youth who had spent his boyhood crawling along underground passages two and a half feet high, and, anxious "that the poetry should stand

on its own merits and not attract a mere ephemeral attention from the fact that the author was a young miner," set about to have them published. As a result *Pit-Head Poems*, with a Preface by Arthur Quiller-Couch, appeared in 1927 and *Out of the Coal-Fields* in 1929.

Technically the verse is unoriginal and derivative. Boden has sipped the alkaline waters of Edward Thomas and drunk too deep of A. E. Housman's bitter wine. "Out of the Heart" might have come straight from Thomas' Pyrgo or Lapwater; "Hady Bells" and "The Dreamer" are musings of an industrialized Shropshire Lad; "The Man" is a (not wholly unconscious) rewrite of Housman's "The Night My Father Got Me." But if there is nothing startling in Boden's accent or philosophy, his lyrics attest a natural voice and ease of production. His poetry won him influential friends so that he graduated from the mine to a position at the University of Exeter. It will be interesting to hear what songs he will sing now that he is no longer at the coal-pit.

## FAITH

Ye mixed for me the same strong brew
With which the poet Christ ye slew,
But as ye forced the goblet near,
The voice of Christ rang in my ear,
"Have faith, they know not what they do."
I took the goblet—drained it clear.

Ye whipped me thro' the windy town
And mocked me when the blood ran down;
Laughing to see my tears start,
Ye stood me in the filthy mart,
And put a serpent in my gown
And bade it eat into my heart.

Yea, cruel things ye did to see
If ye could kill this faith in me;
Ye called me fool and hung me high,
Sport for every passer-by,
And lo, in spite of all of ye,
The faith burns on and will not die.

### THE BELL

Merrily once one Christmas morn,
I heard a bell say Christ was born,
And I knew it lied—I knew that bell
Could not speak truth tho' it cracked and fell.

Cruelly once with whip and blade
Christ was murdered ere I was made,
And ever since then, iron and high,
Christmas bells have done naught but lie.

## PETER QUENNELL

Peter Quennell was born March 5, 1905, in Kent. He was educated at Berkhamstead Grammar School and at Balliol College, Oxford, where he spent two years, being co-editor of *Oxford Poetry*. He made "the customary pilgrimages" to Greece and the Balkans, and since 1927 has lived in London, overlooking the old Tyburn Road.

*Poems* (1926) appeared before Quennell was twenty-one years old, four of the poems being "very early"—"Procne," for example, having been written at the age of sixteen. Quennell's verse is wholly unlike that of his living compatriots, although American readers will detect a similarity to the verbal elegancies of Wallace Stevens. It is as near the abstract as verse can come and still depend on words. Here language flowers of itself, feeding automatically on its own air; image suggests image, and associations grow freely on seemingly unrelated associations. In "The Divers" and "Leviathan," among others, the poetry wanders far from common experience or recognizable emotions or, for that matter, its own subject. But it is never less than poetry. Although the figures flowing into each other have the uncertain, fluid outlines of dream pictures, the musical progression is clear.

It is as music, first of all, that Quennell's poetry succeeds. His accomplishment is the greater since, without the aid of rhyme or definite rhythm, he achieves melodies intangible but more original than lightly summoned tunes. The actors in his verse are vague, the happenings remote and unreal, yet the intent is never false and the effect is a set of nicely adjusted modulations and strange harmonics. It is, in essence, a poetry of shock, but shock without eccentricity, smoothed and almost without surprise.

As an essayist, Quennell has developed slowly but with increasing surety. His *Baudelaire and the Symbolists* (1930) contains five essays outlining the stream which sprang from Baudelaire and which swayed not only French literature but determined in no inconsiderable degree the course of English poetry during and after the Eighteen Nineties.

### PROCNE

So she became a bird and bird-like danced
On a long sloe-bough, treading the silver blossom
With a bird's lovely feet,
And shaken blossoms fell into the hands
Of sunlight, and he held them for a moment
And let them drop.
And in the autumn Procne came again
And leapt upon the crooked sloe-bough singing
And the dark berries winked like earth-dimmed beads,
As the branch swung beneath her dancing feet.

### THE DIVERS

Ah, look,
How sucking their last sweetness from the air
These divers run upon the pale sea verge;
An evening air so smooth my hand could round
And grope a circle of the hollow sky
Without a harshness or impediment.

Look now,
How they run cowering and each unknots
A rag, a girdle twisted on his loins,
Stands naked, quivered in the cool of night.

As boldest lovers will tire presently,
When dawn dries up a radiance on the limbs,
And lapse to common sleep,
To the deep tumult of habitual dreams,
Each sighing, with loosened limbs, as if regretfully,
Gives up his body to the foamless surge.

Water combs out his body, and he sinks
Beyond all form and sound.
Only the blood frets on,
Grown fearful, in a shallow dissonance.

Water strains on his hair and drums upon his flank,
Consumes his curious track
And straight or sinuous path
Dissolves as swift, impermanent as light.

Still his strange purpose drives him, like a beam,
Like the suspended shaft of cavern-piercing sun;
And, hardier still,
With wavering hands, divides the massive gloom,—
A vast caress through which he penetrates,
Or obscure death withdrawing
Veil upon veil,
Discovering new darkness and profounder terror.

"Consider you your loss,
For now what strength of foot or hand
Can take you by the narrow way you came
Through the clear darkness up again and up.
Watch a procession of the living days,
Where dawn and evening melt so soft together
As wine in water, or milk shed in water,
Filming and clouding into even dullness."

"Who weeps me now with pulse of noisy tears,
Who strikes the breast?
If I regret among the flowing weed,
My regret is
Not vocal, cannot pierce to hidden day,
Momentary, soon quenched, like a strangled flame."

## LEVIATHAN

### (*Second Section*)

A music met Leviathan returning,
While the still troubled waters of his passage
Danct every island like a lily head.
Through all the shadowed throats of the wide forest
His unnumbered monster children rode to greet him
On horses winged and dappled over like flowers.

Now huddled waves had lulled their bursting foam
And slight clouds laid their breasts upon the sea;
The sullen winds, head downward from the sky,
Solicited his movement on their viols.

And the palm trees, heat weary,
Chafing smooth limbs within a rinded shell,
Spoke of his coming with soft acclamation,
Like watchers long grown tired, languid and sorry:

"Look, how he comes"—as faint as whispering deer—
"What storm and state he brings." Then louder voices,
The unchaste turtles crying out with pleasure,
And badgers from the earth
Sprawled upon the rocks with animal laughter.

"The Cretan bull ferrying across the sea
Bore home no richer load;
In the reed forest of Eurotas' bank
That quivering swan, clapping strong wings together,
With harsh, sweet voice called out no keener marriage."

Then shrill response, as seeming from the air,
Invoking joy, summoning desire:

"Hither desires,
Coming as thick and hot as the press and hurry of blood
Striking the apse of the brain,
Ranging abroad, carrying your torches high,
Running as light and remote as a scattered cast of pearls."

Then antic spirits from the tulip trees:

"We must have tumblers like a wheel of fire.
We must have dancers moving their suave hands:
The tumblers strung backward like a hoop
Until they thrust vermilioned cheeks between their knees.
And the intricacy
Of sweet involving gayety,
And wine to warm our innocence,
Music to sooth the prickled sense,
Sounding like water or like ringing glass."

*

The mitered Queen of Heaven stirred on her broad, low throne,
Setting the lattice just so much ajar
That wandering airs from earth should cool the room,
Peered down on more-than-Leda and smoothed her wrinkled snood,
Crying to her Father-Spouse—"Dear Lord, how sweet she looks."
The clumsy hierarchies,
Wearied by their continual task of praise,
Rested wide heifer eyes upon her fallen lids.
Islanded in stars,
Even the keen Intelligences turned away
From the mathematic splendour of the spheres' incessant rolling chime.

Himself, the Father moved,
Traditional and vast,
Remembering fresher years,
Might have inclined his steeply pinnacled head,
But his more zealous son,
As neat as Thammuz, with smooth, pallid cheeks,
Sensing an evil, shut the casement fast.

*

But I, remembering Atlantis, wept,
Remembering her paths and unswept flowers,
Clean beaches, patterned by a light sea wrack,
And the ruined halcyon nests that came on shore.

Tears, in their freedom, cloud the eyes,
Drowsing the sense.
Honey and poppy equally mixed together,
They cannot drug away or curtain off with sleep
Such pitiless disharmony of shapes.

## LOUISE MacNEICE

Louise MacNeice, one of the youngest of the Oxonians, attended Merton College and attracted attention as an undergraduate with a group of poems in 1928. With Stephen Spender, she was co-editor of *Oxford Poetry, 1929*, a collection which presented some twenty other youthful poets.

It is too early to appraise Miss MacNeice, especially on the basis of a few poems. But it is evident that her work, although influenced by Edith Sitwell and other contemporaries, reveals an alert mind and an idiom to match. "Cradle Song" is not the only poem which mingles imaginative power and rhyming piquancy.

## CRADLE SONG

The clock's untiring fingers wind the wool of darkness
And we all lie alone, having long outgrown our cradles
(Sleep, sleep, Miriam)
And the flames like faded ladies always unheeded simper
And all is troubledness.

Soft the wool, dark the wool
Is gathered slowly, wholly up
Into a ball, all of it.

And yet in the back of the mind, lulled all else,
There is something unsleeping, un-tamperable-with,
Something that whines and scampers
And like the ladies in the grate will not sleep nor forget itself,
Clawing at the wool like a kitten.

Sleep, sleep, Miriam.
And as for this animal of yours
He must be cradled also.
That he may not unravel this handiwork of forgetfulness.
That he may not philander with the flames before they die.

The world like a cradle rises and falls
On a wave of confetti and funerals
And sordor and stinks and stupid faces
And the deity making bored grimaces.

Oh what a muddle he has made of the wool,
(God will tomorrow have his hands full),
You must muzzle your beast, you must fasten him
For the whole of life—the interim.

Through the interim we pass
Every one under an alias
Till they gather the strands of us together
And wind us up for ever and ever.

The clock's fingers wind, wind the wool of Lethe,
(Sleep, sleep, Miriam)
It glides across the floor drawn by hidden fingers
And the beast droops his head
And the fire droops its flounces
And winks a final ogle out of the fading embers
But no one pays attention;

This is too much, the flames say, insulted,
We who were once the world's beauties and now
No one pays attention
No one remembers us.

## STEPHEN SPENDER

Stephen Spender was born February 28, 1909, of mixed German, Jewish and English origins; his mother was Violet Schuster, his father was Harold Spender, the journalist. As a child he was especially interested in painting; at seventeen he supported himself by printing chemists' labels on his own press. At nineteen he attended University College, Oxford, but, finding university training alien to his temperament, did not complete his courses.

Spender's poetry withholds little; its technique, like its emotion, is forthright, self-declared. Moreover, the verse is free, free not in form but in range and spirit. In his eighteenth year, Spender printed a small volume, *Nine Experiments* (1928). At twenty he had written a quantity of poems which remarkably concealed his youth. But Spender's compositions are propelled by something deeper than energetic youth; he is fecund, not merely facile. An imagination, and a fiery one, is at play in such poems as "A Whim of Time," "Old Wives in March," "Farewell in a Dream," "Winter Landscape" and "Epilogue."

His influences are complex and far to seek. He seems to owe something to Anna Wickham, a little to Gerard Hopkins. What he may do is a matter for much speculation. But whether maturity ripens or stunts his gifts, Spender is already an arresting if practically unknown poet.

### FAREWELL IN A DREAM

Now shout into my dream. These trumpets snored
Less golden by my side, when you were there. . . .

It is no reason now to think me coward
That, being insulted by a gamekeeper,
I hung my head, or looked into the air:
Thrusting between the peaks without a word,
Buttressed against the winds, or like a sword,
Then you were undisputed conqueror.

But dragged into this nightmare symphony
Of drum and tempest surging in my head,
Faced by these symbols of reality
You showed as one most pitifully naked.
I hailed your earth. Salute my Hades too.
Since we must part, let's part as heroes do.

## STATISTICS

Lady, you think too much of speeds,
Pulleys and cranes swing in your mind;
The Woolworth Tower has made you blind
To Egypt and the pyramids.

Too much impressed by motor-cars
You have a false historic sense.
But I, perplexed at God's expense
Of electricity on stars,

From Brighton pier shall weigh the seas,
And count the sands along the shore:
Despise all moderns, thinking more
Of Shakespeare and Praxiteles.

## OLD WIVES IN MARCH

Round fires sit
Old wives, and knit.
Talk together.
Winter weather
Dull as they
Sleeps in gray
All outside
Where seeds hide.
But the spell
Will break, they tell. . . .

March will come
With a drum,
A lioness;
Or progress
Like a lamb
From her dam
To a sheep
Fat as sleep.
Then the Spring
Loud will sing
As any kettle.

The snug petal
Will burst forth,
Show the froth
Underneath:
Wives' smug death
Then will cease:
Spring will tease;
They will rise,
Fire in eyes.

March may come
With a drum
Loud as these
Bursting trees
Or like a lamb.
But the dam
Too, will know
This is so.
Wives won't sit
Then, and knit.

## WINTER LANDSCAPE

Come home with white gulls waving across gray
Fields. Evening. A daffodil West.
Somewhere in clefts of rock the birds hide, breast to breast.

I warm with fire. Curtain shrouds dying day.
Alone. By the glowing ember
I shut out the bleak-tombed evenings of November.

And breast to breast, those swans. Sheep huddle and press
Close. Each to each. Oh,
Is there no herd of men like beasts where man may go?

Come home at last; come, end of loneliness
Sea. Evening. Daffodil West.
And our thin dying souls against Eternity pressed.

## A WHIM OF TIME

A whim of time, the general arbiter,
Proclaims the love instead of death of friends.
Under the domed sky and athletic sun
The three stand naked, the new, bronzed German,
The young communist and myself, being English.
Yet to unwind the traveled sphere ten years
And two take arms, spring to a ghostly posture:
Or else roll on the thing a further ten
And the poor clerk with world-offended eyes
Builds with red hands his heaven; makes our bones
A necessary scaffolding to peace.

Now I suppose that the once-envious dead
Have learnt a strict philosophy of clay
After these centuries, to haunt us no longer
In the churchyard, or at the end of the lane,
Or howling at the edge of the city
Beyond the last bean-rows, near the new factory.
Our fathers enemies, yet lives no feud
Of prompting Hamlet on the kitchen stair,
There falls no shade across our blank of peace
Being together struck across the path
Or taper finger threatening solitude.

Our father's misery, the dead man's mercy,
The cynic's mystery, weaves a philosophy—
That history of man traced purely from dust
Is lipping skulls on the revolving rim
Or posture of slavery with the granite head bowed:
These, risen a moment, joined or separate,
Fall heavily, then are always separate.

A stratum scarce reckoned by geologers,
Sod lifted, turned, slapped back again with spade.

## EXILE

As long as I can hope to see you come
Still to my home, or I go to your home,
I am not whole, and therefore I declare
That where we parted, my heart parted there.
One part is lost, and never shall be found:
Totally separate, mortal is my wound.

My Soul, barred out into this loneliness,
Adopts no tragic motto of distress.
Oh, no, unfeeling lover, this will prove
The perfect amputation of our love:—
I, poet, have stood and watched it half the night
Only regard the moon and cold moonlight
Till head and brain, unused to silences,
Emptied of you, are filled with stars and trees.

## EPILOGUE

Time is a thing
That does not pass through boredom and the wishing,
But must be fought with, rushed at, over-awed,
And threatened with a sword:

For that prodigious voyager, the Mind,
Another self doth find
At each hour's stage, and riven, hewn and wrought
Cannot foretell its port.

Let heart be done, shut close the whining eyes,
And work, or drink, or sleep, till life defies
Minute, month, hour and day
Which are harrowed, and beaten, and scared away.

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